POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY

ANOTHER LEG WAS REVEALED.

(See the Thrilling Story "Voirbo's Victim.")

Vol. III.—No. 29.

"To be left alone
And face to face with my own crime has been
Just retribution."

—LONGFELLOW, "Masque of Pandora."

PART II.

IMMEDIATELY after Lampon, the proprietor of the soup restaurant in the Rue Princesse, had apprised Ringué of his discovery of the human leg in the well of his yard, the officer made his way quickly to the offices of the commissary of police who had charge of the Quartier de l'Odéon. This was M. Macé, then a young man, destined afterwards to make his mark as a chief of the detective force in France, and to have the case I am now describing as his first serious crime, a mystery which is said to be "better than anything invented by the detective novelists, showing again that truth is stranger than fiction, and forming a story of absorbing interest which reads like a romance."

M. Macé was quickly on the spot, and before making any examination of the well or the cellar where the leg had been found, desired the shopkeeper to sit down and quietly tell him exactly what had happened, warning him to be particular in every detail, for his story would have to appear in the official records. This is what he was told:

"For about two weeks I have noticed the strange taste of the water in our well. I have been unable to account for it. Only a short while ago I had the water analysed, and it was pronounced to be clear, perfectly pure, and of the best quality for drinking and cooking purposes.

"Desiring to ascertain what was wrong with it, I took the opportunity this afternoon, when my customers had gone, to make an examination of the well. I went into the cellar where there is a window opening on to the cylinder some distance from the surface of the water. I lit a candle and let it down attached to a thread, and when it was near the surface I saw something bright floating on the water. With a long rake which I use for pulling out the cinders from my furnace, after some difficulty, I secured a parcel and brought it up to the cellar window. When I laid it upon the floor and opened it there was a nasty putrid smell, and then, on examination, I found to my horror that the parcel contained a human leg. I cannot describe the sensation that came over me. I dropped the dreadful thing into an empty box, and tried to make my escape from the cellar, but I felt so bad that I could scarcely ascend the steps. I fancied whilst I was there that I had committed a dreadful crime, and was so frightened that the candle was knocked out, and I was silly enough to imagine that the leg was following me up the stairs, and I am certain if I had not regained the open air I should have fallen down in a swoon.

"As I came to my shop door to call for assistance, I fortunately saw my friend Ringué passing, and called him in. Everybody who lives in the house above me are respectable, and the concierge (doorkeeper) is an old woman who is seventy years of age, and has been here for many years. She is very fond of animals, and keeps cats. One of them has been lost for some time, and I feared that it had fallen into the well, and it was that which caused the corruption of the water. Her name is Modiste Xoru, but she is better known as 'Mother Michel,' and comes from the country. It is quite impossible for me to surmise how the gruesome object could have found its way into the well, for the door is always closed at night, and only the tenants can get in without disturbing the concierge. They can do so by pressing a small iron button only known to them. That is all I can tell you, M. Commissaire."

This was very little for M. Macé to learn, so he next determined to explore the cellar and well at once. Accompanied by his secretary, M. Leroy, and Lampon, he descended the stairs leading to the cellar. With them they took candles and a lantern, together with thread and a string, so that they might further explore the well. This M. Macé found to be an old-fashioned affair some sixty feet deep. Before lowering the light, Lampon pointed to the case and said, "There is the leg in that box," and the commissary examined the horrid relic. He found it to have been a good deal damaged by the implement with which it had been raised, and also that Lampon had severed the cords which had bound the parcel, thereby destroying any peculiarity in the tying of the knots which might possibly have formed a clue. However, there was the leg right enough.

He then proceeded to further investigate the well. Lowering the lantern half way, and a candle as far down as the surface of the water, he was not long in discovering another object floating. With great care a large two-handled copper preserving pan was lowered, attached to two cords. This was allowed to sink under the object, when it was gently raised, and brought up intact. It was a parcel similar to the first that had been recovered. The outer wrapper consisted of a sort of glazed calico, with the ends knotted, and the middle stitched up neatly with black thread. This wrapper when spread out was about a yard square. The inner wrapper consisted of a portion of a pair of trousers, iron-grey in colour, with the buttons removed, purposely, no doubt, to destroy the identity of the maker's name.

This was removed with the greatest care by M. Macé, when another portion of a leg was revealed. It was thin, with shrunken calf; but decomposition had set in to such an extent that the skin was destroyed, making it impossible to be sure whether that of a man or woman. On further examination, however, there was a most valuable attachment to it. A part of a long stocking of a drab colour, over the foot of which, apparently for the wearer's warmth of foot, had been stitched a sock, a fragment of which remained, and upon that piece was a most important clue. Stitched in red cotton was a mark, thus:

x B x

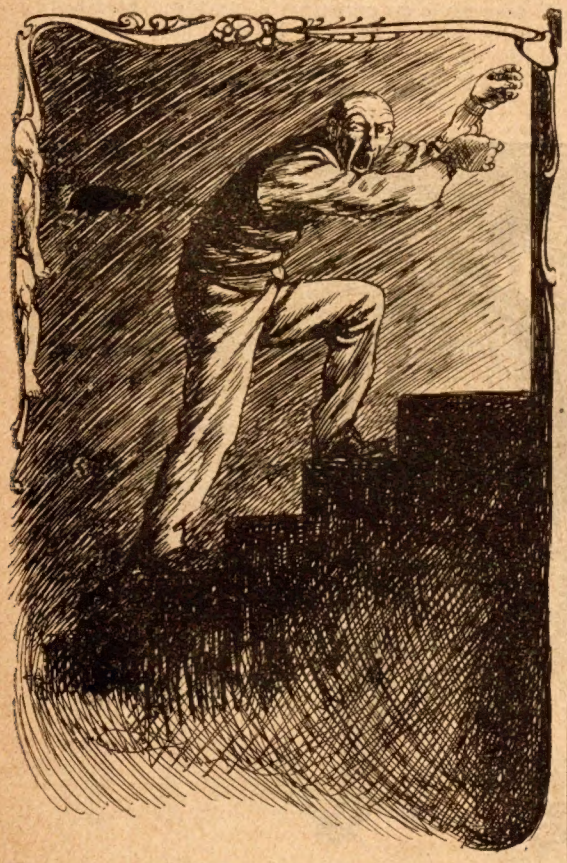
evidently the owner's initial. So far so good.

The young officer became interested. He had the remains carefully conveyed to the Morgue, and then sent for

the "sapeurs pompiers" (firemen), and had the well pumped dry. After a most minute examination, however, nothing more was discovered.

M. Macé made up his mind to one thing, viz., that he must look amongst the tailors of Paris to discover the perpetrator of the crime. At a glance his experienced eye told him that the stitching was so neat, and the knots of the thread with which the parcel had been enclosed so peculiar, that a man whose trade was that of an experienced tailor must have put the finishing touches to this undoubted cold-blooded murder.

The first thing, however, to devote his attention to was the identity of the remains. The surgeons made an examination, and at once came to the conclusion that the legs



"That leg was following me."

belonged to the same corpse from which the thighs and other parts had been severed, and which had already been discovered. They also pronounced them to be parts of the body of a woman.

The energetic commissary did not let the grass grow under his feet. He went through the list of disappearances during the previous six months, which is always kept for reference in Paris at the Préfecture of Police, and found there had been in all 122—38 men and 84 women—missing. Devoting his attention to the latter, he sifted that number down to three—a married woman, a girl, and a widow. Then, communicating with their friends, he took them to the Morgue and tried to get the remains identified. All their names commenced with B, and in one instance he thought he had been successful. The husband of the woman lost was of opinion that the remains were those of his wife. Before, however, this could be satisfactorily established, the lady turned up safe and sound.

For the moment Macé was nonplussed, but with that patience, that resolute and unshaken persistence that characterised M. Macé's career, no less than his consummate skill, backed up by something like intuitive genius, he still threw himself heart and soul into the unravelling of this terrible mystery. 'Twas well he did so, or there is not the slightest doubt that the case would at this period have been dropped, or, as the French say, "classed," that is to say, put amongst other records of undiscovered crimes.

About the end of January, Macé happened to look in at the Morgue, when the oldest "garçon morgueur" (custodian) came to him and saluted him. "Monsieur le Commissaire, pardon me," he said. "You know those two 'flûtes' (slang for legs) which were fished out of the 'lance' (slang for water) of the well, and which I have in custody here? You take it from me, I know a woman's 'branchards' (slang for legs) well enough, dead or alive. 'C'est pas ça du tout' (vulgar for 'they are nothing of the sort'). I am getting all the pieces ready for Professor Gardieu, who comes to look at them to-morrow, and you mark my words, he will tell you that the legs belong to a little old man. I know it by a little piece of skin I have looked at belonging to one of the 'guibolles' (another slang term for legs), and by the size and shape of the feet."

Sure enough, the old man's experience had made him wise. The greatest medico-legist in France, Dr. Gardieu, saw the remains next day, and immediately and unhesitatingly pronounced them to be that of a man advanced in years.

His words to M. Macé were, "My colleagues who said that these are parts of the body of a woman were in error, how or why I cannot say. The feet are longer than a woman's [the very remark made by the old "garçon morgueur"]. The instrument used for dismemberment was a cleaver or chopper. The work has been skilfully done, for the cuts are clean, and made soon after death. There has been a considerable effusion of blood. I observe also there is a clearly-marked scar on one leg, only recently healed. I fear these few facts will not help you much. Without the head it will not be easy to establish identity. The murderer appears to have taken good care to conceal that most important piece of evidence."

Macé, however, became very cheerful. He cared but little about the head. What pleased him most was to learn that the victim had been a male. Had he not also found another clue in the scar on the leg? That, with the mark xBx on the sock, the manner in which the parcel was done up, and the materials, were ample for him to work upon. He would continue his efforts with renewed vigour. The remains of the corpse must be identified.

And now let us for the moment return to our friends the police officers, Ringué and Champy. They still did their night duty together, and it may readily be imagined that their chief topic of conversation was the discovery in the well at the house in the Rue Princesse, and the subject of the mystery generally. Of course they both had their own theories upon the matter.

One night Champy, the young gendarme, who, it will be remembered, came from the country, said to his comrade, "Ringué, do you know I have been thinking about Mother Michel, the old woman who is the concierge at the house in the Rue Princessé. I have found out that she comes from near my home, and I have an idea."

"Well, what is it, Champy?" said the old sergeant.

"You remember that night just before the New Year, when we stopped the man in the Place Buci?" asked the young officer. "He said he lived in the Rue Princesse."

"Perfectly; I remember it. The man who was carrying the parcel with the hams," said Ringué.

"Yes. Well, do you know I have been wondering whether he was a relation of old Mother Michel; for you will also remember that he told us that he came from Langres. I intend to inform M. Macé to-morrow of my thoughts. Anyhow, whenever I think of those legs found in the well, the thought of that fellow comes into my head. In fact, when I am not thinking I seem to hear the words, 'cross-roads de Buci,' 'that night,' 'Rue Princesse,' 'hams,' 'short gent.' In fact, they are always in my head."

Old Ringué thought seriously for a moment, grunted, then changed the subject.

On the following morning Champy kept his word, and went to the office of M. Macé and told him the story. The detective listened attentively, made a few notes, and requested the young constable to make himself acquainted with the eccentric old woman, which he thought would be easy enough, being a countrywoman of his, to find out all he could, and report. Champy went away proud of the mission entrusted to him, and had visions of immediate promotion.

The very next day the sergeant-de-ville is at the house in the Rue Princesse, and makes himself known to the old concierge. At first he is received very discourteously, when she finds that he has not come to tell her that he has found her lost cat. But when he gets the opportunity to speak of his country home, the old lady becomes quite familiar, and even asks him to take lunch with her. To Champy's delight, too, he discovers that some members of her family have married into his, and they have much to talk about. So well does the young officer progress, that he soon finds out that none of her relations have been to Paris to visit her for years. This is rather disappointing, for it destroys his theory as to the man with the hams. On the other hand, he has paved the way for his chief to visit her, and he has made, at any rate, friends with one who is likely to be very useful during the investigation, and who was thought to be by everybody either bordering upon an idiot in her eccentricity, or at any rate quite unapproachable.

Having made his report to M. Macé, Champy urges his chief to pay the old woman a visit. This was one of the cards the detective had to play, but he had been waiting patiently for the opportunity to be made for him. It had now arrived.

That same evening found him at the house in the Rue Princesse, where, rather to his surprise, he was received most courteously by Mdme. Xoru (better known as "Modiste Michel"). As he anticipated, the old dame was surrounded by her favourite cats, and, of course, like the astute detective that he was, he admired her pets, asked her if she had found her favourite, and stroked and made great friends with the Misses Puss.

The old lady was so impressed with M. Macé's attentions to "Blanc-blanc," the valuable cat which had been lost and found, that madame favoured him with a complete history of the favoured animal's career, to which he listened with rivetted attention, although the adventures, as related by madame, would have made a novelette. At length, when there is a lull in the conversation, the lady having for the moment exhausted the topic, M. Macé asks her what she thinks of the affair of the well.

"How do I know anything about it, monsieur? They will drive me to my grave over that matter. Everybody in the house asks me about it. How is it possible for me to tell why the murderer—if murderer he be—should have thrown those legs into my well? And such a nice well, such

"I THINK OF THOSE LEGS FOUND IN THE WELL."

delightful water—'l'eau Princesse,' we have always called it. I have drank it for fifty years, and my health until now has been excellent. My tenants will drive me mad."

"You have some bad tenants, then, madame? I am surprised, for the information we have about them is very good," said Macé.

"The tenants I have now—yes. But formerly I had a tenant at the top of the house who was a very bad girl. But I am very pleased to say that she has now left since last quarter," observed madame.

M. Macé became interested, for the police had failed to trace anybody with a suspicious character who resided in the house where the legs were found. He quietly asked her name.

"Mathilde, we knew her by. She called herself, however, 'Mdlle. Dard.' But possibly that was not her real name. Those sort of people rarely have their right names," added the old lady, rather spitefully.

"What was her business?" asked the commissary.

"Humph! I should not like to say. She was always

walking out, dining, or in bed. There is little of work she did," said madame.

"But did she never do work out or at home—nothing for her living?" questioned the officer.

Then the old lady remembered that some long time before she left she used to make white waistcoats for some tailors. At this word tailor Macé became very interested. It was the first shadow of a clue he had obtained to work out his problem. He must learn more about this Mdlle. Dard, who did tailors' work in the house.

"Do you know what she is doing now?" asked the commissary.

"Oh, yes," was the reply. "She is singing at the cafés. It is only the other day that I saw her. My goodness, what a change in the girl! She was dressed magnificently, wearing a splendid fur jacket, a chinchilla boa, and a hat like a guardsman's busby. All real furs, too."

"Only one, I think, and he lives over the road," said madame. "He is the assistant at the chemist's at the corner, and he was always running up and down, bringing her dentifrice, scents, and those sort of things."

"Have you any idea as to where she resides now?" he asked.

"Oh, anywhere, I should think. She sold her bedstead, chairs, chest of drawers, and other furniture to the dealer farther down. I should be very much surprised to hear that she has any fixed address."

"Will you tell me, madame, about how old this Mdlle. Dard is, and can you describe her?" asked the commissary.

"Yes, the wicked creature, I can describe her. I shall not forget her as long as I live. She poisoned my cat, I verily believe, and when I charged her with it, threatened me with her fists, and I thought that she would strike me—strike an old woman like me. Yes, the vixen, I will describe her to you, monsieur. She declared she was only twenty, but I know better; she was five-and-twenty or thirty if she was a day. She looked as if she had been born in the gutters of Paris. She is little, not pretty; her nose turns up, without much bridge to it; her eyes remind me of those of a crawfish, and her ears hang down like flaps."

RECEIVED MOST COURTEOUSLY BY MADAME XORU.

"Did she leave the apartment above on her own account?" was the question.

"Oh, no, indeed. M. Lampon, who keeps the soup-shop, and who is in charge for the landlord, gave her notice to quit. He is a good man, and then mdlle. had too many followers," replied the old lady sarcastically.

"Had she one whom she preferred apparently more than the rest?" asked Macé.

"Don't think so," was the curt reply. "She seemed to prefer them all. Ah, monsieur, she was a very bad girl, and called me the most infamous names, and I had no peace in the house whilst she was here. Night after night she would be at the balls of the 'Bullier,' and the next morning it would be nothing but men calling. It was 'Ma'ms'elle Dard,' 'Ma'ms'elle Dard,' 'Ma'ms'elle Dard,' from morning till night. At last I got so enraged that I told them all to go up to the fifth floor (her room was at the top of the house), and up they went one after another. Her name was painted on the door."

"Would you recognise any of her numerous followers?" asked M. Macé.

It was quite evident to M. Macé that Mdlle. Dard was no friend of Mother Michel's, so, having, he imagined, as much information as he could get from the old woman, he arose to take his leave.

When he asked for the date upon which the young lady left her apartment, madame went to fetch her book, and on glancing at it, remembered that she had not told M. Macé that the girl came under another name, that which was the real one. "Here is the entry," she said, handing her visitor the book.

"Mdlle. Gaupe (Mathilde), waistcoat maker, took rooms July 8, 1868, left January 7th, 1869. Rent, 150f."

This was important information, for in France it is a

law that people's names must be registered, and in the possession of the police. Now it would be less difficult to trace the girl. But before he departed M. Macé was destined to hear something of very much greater importance. Again thinking of her cats, Mother Michel said:

"Yes, Monsieur le Commissaire, I am thankful that the vile creature has gone. Do you know, she caused a letter to be written to the police complaining about my poor dumb animals being a nuisance. I know who wrote the letter, too. It was that low wretch of a man who used to carry up the water for her, and spill it all over my stairs."

"What?" said Macé quickly. "Was he a water porter?"

It was usual in Paris at that time, when all water was carried up from the wells, to pay a 'porteur d'eau' so much weekly to carry it to the floors above.

"Oh, no. He was a tailor who used to frequently bring her work. He would stop in her room and drink with her. Then she would make him bring up the water; but, oh dear, what a mess the fellow used to make on my stairs!"

"Do you know this man's name, madame, or anything concerning him?" asked Macé.

"Nothing whatever," was the reply.

"Good night, madame. I may have the pleasure of seeing you again," said the young officer, and he walked

"She was dressed magnificently."

straight across the road to the chemist's shop, knowing that the man who visited mdlle. and was a candidate for her charms would have a rival in the apothecary's assistant, who had the same inclinations.

He found a young fellow of about nineteen years of age behind the counter, and addressing him, said, "Good evening. I believe you are intimately acquainted with Mdlle.

"I am told that she is still in Paris."

Dard, who formerly lived in the Rue Princesse. You frequently accompanied her to the balls at Bullier. I am told that she is still in Paris."

"Yes, monsieur, that is perfectly true," said the chemist. "She is singing now at the café concerts, principally at the 'Beuglant,' in the Rue Mazet, and at the 'Génie,' on the Boulevard Mazas."

"Thank you. Again, do you know also a tailor who frequently visited her—used to bring work to her, and be rather friendly?" asked the commissary carelessly.

"Oh, yes, I think I know who you mean. He is a tailor who lives in the Rue Mazarine, and he used to bring wedding waistcoats for Mathilde to make up for him. I only know that he was called Pierre. He was a short man, who usually wore a long coat and a tall hat. I have seen him many times both in the Rue Princesse and at the cafés," replied the youth.

"Good night," said Macé.

And then, walking slowly in the direction of home, he lit a cigarette and softly said to himself, "Good! La fille Mathilde Dard, the tailor Pierre, the water on the stairs, 'Il faut les voir—la femme d'abord—l'homme ensuite. Le puits, la fille, le tailleur, tout cela se relie——"

"I have come, I think, to the beginning of the end. You should sleep well to-night, my friend Macé."

TO BE CONTINUED

THE WAYS OF THE CRIMINAL

XV.—WELL KNOWN BUT STILL HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL SWINDLES.

IF the British public were not "mostly fools," a good many highly-successful and flourishing swindlers would feel a pretty considerable "draught." Almost every day in the week the newspapers report the perpetration of some swindle or other, and add the remarks of the magistrates who express their surprise at the gullibility of the prosecutor.

But if the newspapers published warnings day after day, if placards were posted far and wide giving a list of the swindles constantly practised, the confidence man and others in his line would still reap a fine harvest. People are always anxious to get something for nothing, and in their fierce anxiety to "make a bit" they usually get left.

Take the old story of the parrot, the sailor and the cage. A man whose costume smacks of the sea drops into a public-house quite casually and strikes up an acquaintance with another patron of the establishment who looks as if he were worth a few shillings. The "sailor," jolly dog that he is, seems full of splendid stories of travel and adventure. The two spend a merry hour or so over a few glasses of beer, and then arrive at the "mutual admiration" stage. The tar professes a great liking for his new-found friend and swears that he will give him a present. Would he like a good talking parrot? Would he, indeed? If there is anything a man will make himself a fool over it is a talking parrot. So the prospective victim announces that the possession of a

Knew where he could get a perfect beauty for five shillings.

sagacious bird of this description is all that he lives for. Then he shall have one is the announcement of the generous sailor, who adds, "I've got a couple on my ship. Let's go and get one." As a rule the victim decides in favour of the bird, and off they go to obtain it. Arriving at or near the docks, the "sailor" leaves his friend on the pretence of getting the bird. Soon, however, he returns, explaining that he had forgotten to mention the fact that he had no cage for the bird, and that, as it was somewhat bad tempered, one had better be obtained. He goes on to state that he knows

Of the times when the marlinspike drove him to his duty.

where he can get "a perfect beauty" for five shillings, obtains that amount from his "friend," and vanishes, never to return, unless, by some chance or other, the police have spotted him.

Then there is the swindler with the worthless ring, who appears in many and various disguises. At one time he, too, is a sailor, but not of the jolly type. On the contrary, he is a man with a grievance. Having selected his victim, he taps him on the shoulder and proceeds to relate—darkly and in a whisper—a fearsome tale of brutality at sea. He tells of the first mate who "hazed" him on every occasion, of the captain who threatened to clip the corners of his certificate (a seaman's discharge has "very good" printed in each corner, and a man with a bad character receives his discharge ticket with the corners cut off), and of the times when the marlin-spike drove him to his duty. Then, with a still hoarser whisper, he intimates that he has been revenged on his persecutors. He explains that when the skipper and the chief mate were both on deck he succeeded in rifling their berths, and (here the victim becomes more than interested) he managed to relieve them of some of their valuables. From his pocket he draws a ring. In the midst of a broad band of "gold" gleams a "diamond." "What d'ye think of that?" is the seaman's question, and, without waiting for an answer, he declares his readiness to part with the jewel for an absurdly small sum. If the victim succumbs to his wiles and buys the ring, so much the better for the latter, for he has at least acquired experience, if not wisdom, for his money. The ring turns out to be nothing more or less than a poor imitation, which can be bought in Birmingham for a few shillings per dozen. One of the most successful swindlers at this game was a negro, who hailed from Jamaica, and who sold many hundreds of the rings for at least a dozen times their value before he was dropped on by the police.

This man was remarkably cute. He carried with him a genuine ring exactly similar in every detail to the spurious article. If his prospective victim cast any doubts upon the genuineness of the article for sale, the negro at once proposed an adjournment to a jeweller's shop, either the nearest at hand or any one the victim cared to select. Arriving at the jeweller's, the negro very cleverly changed the rings to

be tested, and handed in the real article, which the jeweller at once pronounced to be a really valuable gem. The black man took it back from the shopman, quickly changed it for the "Brummagem" article, which he had kept palmed, and soon reaped the reward of his astuteness.

Dart forward with a cry of delight.

In this connection the author of "Pitcher in Paradise" tells an excellent story, in which spurious metal was used to prove that a real gold chain was only common brass. The hero of the story is "Chippy Norton," as the late Mr. Henry Bull, of Birmingham, the famous bookmaker, was called, and the clever author of the book named remarks, "One of the things of beauty with which he (Chippy) was wont to adorn his ponderous person was a huge gold watch cable. The regular racegoer was as familiar with the sight of that chain as he was with the red post on Newmarket's classic heath; and, indeed, he saw it fifty times oftener. In point of weight it might have held the "Cedric" at her moorings, and what was its intrinsic value it makes me dizzy to estimate. But there came a day when a fresh 'head'—in reality a conscienceless counterfeiter and sleight-of-hand sharp from Gloucester Street, Clerkenwell—came a-racing, and he and his pals soon got familiar with old Chippy. At the end of two or three weeks, and of one particular day's racing at Derby, the little mob stood round the bookie at a refreshment bar, and whiskey flowed like water. And presently the new boy, who had been openly admiring Chippy's lovely jewellery and decanter-stopper shirt-studs for several seconds, came out with the observation:

"'Chippy, old man——'

"'Mister Bull, if you please!'-growled Chippy, who in his later years was very prone to check this sort of familiarity.

"'Well, Mr. Bull, then. D'ye know, I've just been thinking what a pooty little chain that is of yours, an' the only thing that sets me wonderin' is why you don't have it reproduced in gold. But I s'pose you wouldn't risk wearing a gold chain on a racecourse?'

"To say that Chippy was absolutely flabbergasted is to put the thing extremely mildly. For a few seconds speech quite failed him, and, even when he found it, it was not of a nature suited to reproduction. But, with the racing man's first resource, he promptly offered to bet that it was a solid gold chain, and his offer was instantly accepted. Would he bet a hundred? Ay, or even a monkey! The other man, equally confident, said that nothing in life would suit him better than to risk his whole day's winnings on his little Clerkenwell opinion, and he had won a little over a thousand—they would 'call it a thousand,' anyway.

"Chippy took it on.

"Both parties staked. Then to the largest jeweller's in the Midland capital thronged the excited company, and, after some palaver as to the exact terms in which the question was to be put to the goldsmith, Chippy took off his watch-chain. The layer of the big bet temporarily grabbed and held the chain while raising an objection to the name of any particular metal being suggested to the jeweller—a fastidious bit of hyperprecision; but he held the chain for about three seconds, and then, his point being granted, passed the bauble across the counter. The jeweller fetched his acid and, calmly and dispassionately, applied the test.

"The chain was of common white metal, thinly gilded over!

"Chippy's rage was positively picturesque in its magnitude and intensity. He raved about what the chain had cost him, and blared of the fate that should befall the wretched jeweller in Birmingham of whom he bought the thing as soon as he should get back to New Street. He was going to run all the way from the station to the shop and have the poor jeweller ripped up and hamstrung before he could inquire what he had done to merit evisceration. For all this blather, however, there was no way out of paying up over the lost bet, and so the shrewd punter received the two thousand. Chippy replaced the chain, which the winner asked to have 'one more look at' as it was given back, across his waistcoat, and the whole army of occupation then in Derby talked of nothing else all night.

"It was on the very next night after Chippy had had a snorting bad day, that another sharp, who only came racing occasionally, asked to be allowed to see the chain, and, having seen it, said:

"'Not gold? Rats! These goldsmiths you've been to ought to be hoeing cabbages! It's snide, eh? Well, snide or not snide, Chippy, I shall give you fifty quid for it.'

"'Now, don't mess me about, me lad,' snarled Chippy, 'because I've—well, never mind, but I've 'ad enough of it.

He will sell the ring to anyone in the crowd.

I've 'ad it tested, an' it's brass! But the job isn't ended yet, an' don't you forget it!'

"But the other was importunate. He didn't care a something or other, he said, for all the so-called jewellers in Derby. Market gardeners they were, not jewellers at all.

He'd been one of the first hundred men in the old Broken Hill camp, and, lord lummy! if he didn't know gold when he saw it, it was time he got out a broom and started sweeping crossings! Anyway, he'd bet a level hundred, he said, as he pulled out a roll of banknotes, that the chain was gold; and Chippy, with the weakness and the ineradicable love of chance common to racing people, without exception, took the bet on.

"Not to any one jeweller's did they go that night, but to twenty. And all were firm in the opinion that the chain was of pure gold and of the highest carat. Five or six firms offered to buy it outright if the gentleman wished to sell, but Chippy took his medicine like a man. He paid out the eleventh hundred with the injured air of one who has acquired some great scientific truth late in life, and from that day to the end the most skilful of the lads allowed him to run loose, so that his sacred resolution never, in any future bets about the weight, length, strength, genuineness, or intrinsic value of his cable, to let it out of his own hand, even in passing it to a goldsmith, was a superfluous and a wasted one."

Then, too, there is the old reliable swindle known as the ring dropping trick. It is as old as the eternal hills, but to judge from the number of cases which crop up at our public courts it is as successful as ever. The swindle is worked, as a rule, by two, and sometimes three, men, and, in order to obtain the best possible result, crowded thoroughfares are generally chosen as the theatre of operations. One of the gang, usually poorly clad, seizes a favourable opportunity when a crowd of people are passing to dart forward with a cry of delight and pick up apparently from the gutter a rich-looking gold ring. His exaggerated joy naturally draws upon him the attention of passers-by, and as he openly examines his "find" the curious quickly gather round to see what has been found. To the audience the swindler promptly exhibits the ring, discourses on his wonderful luck, adding that now, at any rate, he will be able to buy himself the dinner which he pretends he is so much in need of.

At this moment another of the swindlers appears on the scene and asks to be allowed to examine the ring. Turning it over, holding it up to the light, and generally adopting the air of a man who knows a good bit of jewellery when he sees it, the newcomer, whilst handing the ring back to the "finder," remarks that it is quite worth "a tenner," and that he would like to purchase it, but for the fact that he has not sufficient money about him. Now, with the "finder" starting on his way for the nearest pawnshop, swindler No. 3 chips in with his say, and both praises and appraises the ring. By now the finder has some doubts, which he expresses aloud, as to whether it would be advisable to pawn the ring or not. Visions of dealing in stolen property arise before him, he again comments on his want of a dinner, and goes on to say that he will sell the ring to anyone in the crowd. He regretfully remarks the disappearance of the gentleman who valued the ring at £10, and then, in a fit of desperation, offers to part with it for a couple of pounds. As his desire for food increases so will the price of the ring decrease, and eventually he will be offering it for anything from fifteen shillings downwards. As a rule someone in the crowd steps forward, parts with his money, and leaves with a ring worth at the utmost a shilling or so. If there is no "jay" in the crowd the swindler departs to try his dodge in another street.

One gang who were haled up not so long ago boasted that, given a fine day, they sold on an average two of the rings, and made a rattling good living out of the swindle.

Next week we will tell you about the gold dust frauds.

Also Is Not Likewise.

A CELEBRATED Scotch advocate, Mr. John Clark, was once pleading before Lord Meadowbank (the second), who was the son of Lord Meadowbank (the first), the father being a more learned and powerful judge than his successor. Mr. Clark was explaining to the jury his construction of some words in a conveyance, and contrasting the use of the word "also" with that of the word "likewise."

The judge remarked, "Surely Mr. Clark, you cannot seriously argue that 'also' means anything different from 'likewise.' They mean precisely the same thing; and it matters not which of them is preferred." "Not at all, my lord, there is all the difference in the world between these two words. Let us take an instance:—your worthy father was Lord Meadowbank; your lordship is 'also' Lord Meadowbank; but you are not 'likewise' Lord Meadowbank."

"THE BAILER OUT."

A Strange Profession which Thrives on Crime.

THE cheeky remark made by one of the female prisoners in Millbank to the governor of that establishment some little time before it was closed—"You makes your living out of the likes of us. If we weren't here you would not have a job."—reminds one of the number of persons who really live upon crime. But for the existence of inherent evil, the lawyers, barristers, and judges would have a sorry time of it; the police, ushers, and court officials would be out of work; an army of warders, gaolers, and prison employees would join the ranks of the unemployed; but, the strangest of all, the person who would find his daily bread lacking would be the professional "bailer out."

Few people have heard of this strange calling, but for all that it exists, and, from particulars which we have been able to gather, it is far from an unprofitable one. Attached—unofficially, of course—to the police-stations in the West of London, and to others throughout the kingdom where "swells" are likely to be run in after a heavy night's spree, are several people who make their living by going bail for the culprits who are not desirous of spending the night in the comfortless police cell.

The procedure is simple enough. A man is taken to the police-station charged with some minor offence. He does not wish any of his friends to know of his mishap, and possibly it may be too late for him to have them aroused. He confides in the friendly constable who conducts him to his cell that he wants bail. Half an hour elapses, and an individual is shown into the dungeon, fairly well dressed, and with a prosperous look. He says that he is willing to go bail, charging from half-a-crown to ten shillings for the accommodation. In most cases he requires his fee in advance. Then the necessary papers are signed, and he stands to lose any sum from ten to fifty pounds if the delinquent does not present himself at the police-court next day.

Naturally, the business has the element of risk in it, and the "bailer out" to whom we talked lamented that he had lost twenty pounds only a few weeks before; but the profession is not overcrowded, business is plentiful, and, to judge from the appearance of those engaged in the trade, profits must be fairly good. The stock-in-trade required is very small. The "bailer" must be a householder, have his name in the directory, if possible, and have goods to the value of the greatest amount for which he goes bail. The police are perfectly aware that all these particulars are correct, and as long as they have something on which they can distrain if the prisoner flies from justice, the authorities do not concern themselves about the trifle that the parties never met till that very evening.

It Was Well Hung.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH was reputed to be very severe as a criminal judge, and one day at an assize dinner a member of the Bar offered to help him to some fowl.

"No, I thank you," said his lordship, "I mean to try that beef."

"I am sure you'll like it," said Hyde, "it is well hung beef."

The Man with Six Wives.

AN Irishman named Flynn was charged before a magistrate with having committed bigamy in a very aggravated form. The prisoner had, it appeared, in the course of his matrimonial ventures, actually married six different women.

The magistrate asked for an explanation of this Blue-Beard-like propensity, and the Irishman said, "Shure, sorr, I was only lookin' for a good one!"

The Chess-Playing Murderer.

A RATHER brutal judge once tried a man for murder with whom, in other days, he had been in the habit of playing at chess.

The jury returned into court with a verdict of guilty, whereupon his lordship turned to the unhappy prisoner, whose name was Mathew Hay, and ejaculated, "That's checkmate to you, Mathew!" What would be thought of such an incident in these days of grace?

HOW THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON DEALT WITH AN OBDURATE BANKER.

A DETERMINED DUCHESS.

"With all a woman's wily ways, she had the firmness, the decision of a man—and more than most."
—POTEMPKIN'S "Life of Catherine of Russia."

THIS remarkable woman—famous alike for her beauty, her wit and her almost masculine strength of mind—was the daughter of Colonel Chudleigh, a scion of an old Devonshire family.

Her father dying while she was yet a child, her mother was left with a very moderate income, but she did not fail to take full advantage of the connection she had amongst the great and fashionable, and at 18 Miss Chudleigh, either in respect to attractions or accomplishments, was an ornament to any society, however highly placed. At this period of her eventful life she secured, through the influence of Mr. Pulteney—then Leader of the Opposition in the Lower House—an appointment as maid-of-honour to the Princess of Wales. Thrown into the vortex of fashionable life, her beauty and endowments of mind secured for her very many admirers, and amongst these was the then Duke of Hamilton, premier peer of Scotland, who was afterwards married to the famous Miss Gunning. The duke proposed matrimony and was accepted, it being agreed that the wedding should take place on his return from a foreign tour which he was then about to undertake. But the stars in their courses fought against the love-lorn duke, and they were greatly assisted by the efforts of a Miss Hanmer, an aunt to Miss Chudleigh, who was exceedingly anxious that the young lady should marry a gentleman for whom she entertained a great regard, and who was a constant visitor at her residence. The favoured one of Miss Hanmer was the Hon. Mr. Hervey, a son of the Earl of Bristol, and at that time a captain in the Royal Navy.

Now, Miss Chudleigh preferred the duke to the honourable, and Miss Hanmer had recourse to stratagem in order to achieve the desired end. She deliberately intercepted and suppressed his grace's amorous communications from abroad, and found every possible opportunity for Mr. Hervey to press his own suit in propria persona.

The inevitable happened. The girl, proud and haughty, was indignant at the unnatural silence of her fiancé; Mr. Hervey was attentive, devoted and agreeable; she grew estranged towards the duke, and finally, in a moment of pique, accepted and married his rival.

The disenchantment was speedy. The connubial rights were attended with unhappy consequences, which can only be hinted at, and from the night following the day on which the unfortunate union took place Miss Chudleigh resolved to have no further marital intercourse with her husband. The young wife threatened that, if he claimed her as his spouse—the great world was not yet aware of the marriage—she would resign her appointment with royalty, and, as Captain Hervey was not rich, the fear of the loss of the emoluments of her office induced him to consent to her terms.

But the captain, later on, seeing his wife courted on every hand and the admired of all admirers, experienced pangs of that jealousy which is inseparable from the nature of peer or peasant, and he demanded and secured an interview at his own house, threatening a disclosure of the marriage if she refused the boon which was his right. The result of this strange rencontre between wife and husband was a boy, whose existence Mrs. Hervey had much difficulty in concealing, but it died in early infancy, and I fear that the maternal grief was somewhat diluted with relief.

Soon after this event the Duke of Hamilton returned to England, and his first mission was to demand from the lady an explanation of her silence. In a moment she became convinced of her aunt's deception, and, though the faithful duke again proffered marriage, she was, of course, obliged, reluctantly enough, to decline the honour. The rejection of her first lover was followed by that of other "eligibles," and her mother, who was unaware of the ties she had secretly formed, could not conceal her rage and astonishment at her daughter's conduct.

Shortly after giving the duke his congé, Mrs. Hervey went to Germany, and was there received and welcomed by the highest in the land, including the Electress of Saxony, who stood her friend through all her subsequent troubles and misfortunes. On her return to London she again embarked upon a voyage of pleasure, but its joys were marred for her by the hateful presence of her lawful husband, who at every social festivity to which she was invited contrived to be present as a sort of spectre at the feast. She was driven at last by his unmanly threats to a full disclosure to her royal mistress, but the latter sympathised with and pitied her and continued her patronage till she died.

Mrs. Hervey now contemplated a ruse by which she might, at one fell stroke, deprive her husband of the power to claim her as his wife. She obtained access to the register-book which contained the hard and indisputable fact of her marriage, and, while the person in whose custody it lay had his back turned, she cunningly extracted the incriminating leaf. Thus, for a time, she was able to bid defiance to her husband, but when that gentleman became Earl of Bristol, with a considerable increase of fortune, a change came o'er the spirit of her dream. Mr. Hervey was "anathema," but an earl was a persona grata, and for the first time she thought of her husband with some respectful consideration. She at once wished to announce herself as Countess of Bristol, but first it became absolutely necessary to again obtain access to the register, and to replace the announcement of the marriage in another form. Bribes and promises prevailed. The book was arranged to her satisfaction, and she returned to town. To her infinite chagrin, she was offered marriage by no less a person than the Duke of Kingston, whom she would have at once accepted but for the damning fact that she had herself deliberately re-tied the knot which now again bound her to the Earl of Bristol. Every advice was taken, every means tried to effect the cancelling of the marriage, but nothing but failure resulted, and the duke's passion meanwhile becoming still more ardent, Mrs. Hervey, now the countess, was prevailed upon to cohabit with his grace, though with such outward observances of decorum that their intimacy was not remarked.

At length, however, the sun appeared to smile again upon our heroine's fortunes. The Earl of Bristol found himself sincerely attached to a lady with whom a union could not fail to be advantageous, and he agreed to put no obstacle in her path if the countess should bring an action for divorce. A jactition suit was instituted, but the evidence by which the marriage could have been proved was kept back, and the earl, failing, as it was intended he should fail, to substantiate the union between them, a decree was made declaring any claim he should make on her to be null and void. Thus each party became free, and the marriage of the Duke of Kingston and "Miss Chudleigh" was publicly solemnised.

This was her hour of triumph, and for a few years she was quite a leader of London society. But Nemesis was at hand, and she was checked in her career of pleasure by the death of the duke, whose fortune was not entailed, and who was in a position, therefore, to will it away as he chose. He excluded from every benefit an elder, and gave preference to a younger nephew as the heir-entail, while as regards his wife he bequeathed to her the income of his estates during her life conditionally upon her remaining in a state of widowhood. This clause was far from being to the liking of the duchess, and she employed her solicitor, a Mr. Field, to attend his grace and use his persuasion to procure a remission of this portion of the will, and before the objectionable condition could be eradicated, however, the duke expired.

A Mrs. Cradock, in the capacity of domestic, had witnessed the marriage between her grace and the Earl of Bristol, and this person now determined to place her information and evidence—at a price—at the disposal of the disappointed relations of the duke. Accordingly, she interviewed Mr. Evelyn Meadows, a nephew of the late duke, and much disliked by him, and this gentleman now perceived an excellent opportunity to injure the duchess, whom he believed to have influenced his uncle in his disfavour. Satisfied with the testimony of Mrs. Cradock, which she would be able to

make on oath, he preferred a bill of indictment against the duchess for bigamy, and a true bill was duly returned.

Notice was sent to the duchess that she must return to London—she was in Italy at the time—and face this charge, the alternative being a sentence of outlawry. She prepared for the homeward journey, for the purpose of which, however, money was required, and she applied to Mr. Jenkins, a banker in Rome, in whose hands she had placed security for all such sums as she might find herself in need of. The opposition of her foes had, however, already commenced, and on calling at the banker's, Mr. Jenkins was reported as being out, and not to be found. She then wrote to this man of money, and informed him that she required cash for her journey; but he did not see fit to reply, and avoided seeing his fair and firm client. The latter was not in a humour to be trifled with. She ordered her carriage, put a pair of pistols in her pocket, and driving to Mr. Jenkins's, peremptorily demanded admission. Mr. Jenkins was again conveniently "out," whereupon this determined woman calmly announced her intention to "await his return if it is for a year," sat herself down on the stairs, and kept the door open with the muzzle of one of the pistols, which she ostentatiously displayed.

This line of conduct appeared to have considerable effect upon the banker, and materially hastened his appearance. The lady demanded money, and when Mr. Jenkins appeared inclined to temporise, she brought matters to a crisis by threatening him in the most business-like way with one of her two weapons. In a word, she pointed a pistol at his head, and the banker, pale and perturbed, presently "parted." The money in her hands, she quitted Rome, but before she reached the Alps she was taken dangerously ill, and an abscess forming in her side, she was obliged to rest at Calais. She soon recovered, however, and crossed to Dover, driving post-haste to Kingston House, and she found that many influential friends were prepared to take up the cudgels on her behalf. She obtained bail without difficulty, and the whole proceedings against her would have fallen through had she consented to pay Mrs. Cradock a small yearly sum as a return for keeping back her evidence. But the duchess would only offer £20 per annum, and Mrs. Cradock knew she could deal better with the other side. Pending the trial, the actor Foote wrote and threatened to produce a farce called "The Trip to Calais," in which the duchess was to be satirised and caricatured as Lady Kitty Crocodile—a fact which, coming to her knowledge, induced her to offer as much as £1,600 for its suppression. But Foote, standing out for 2,000 guineas, overreached himself. Influential friends of the persecuted woman were induced to report the circumstances to the Chamberlain of the Household, and he having perused the play, saved the duchess from public derision by refusing to license it.

The trial took place in 1776, and the duchess was found guilty of having committed bigamy, but she handed in a paper which was read by the Clerk of the Court as follows, "I plead the privilege of the peerage," and she was discharged on payment of the usual fees.

The prosecutors were not satisfied, and they had a plan in embryo to confine her person to the kingdom, and to deprive her of her property, but being advised of the probability of these proceedings being taken, she fled the country and proceeded to Calais. There she remained, but in no great security of mind, for an attempt was now made to set aside the will of the Duke of Kingston, which kept her in constant apprehension.

HOW THE DUCHESS SERVED THE BANKER.

After the courts had decided in her favour, she took a magnificent mansion near Paris, the price of which was £55,000, and proceeded to dissipate the Kingston wealth as rapidly as possible. But the end was near at hand. Her strange, eventful life was near its close. One day, while at dinner, information was brought her that judgment had gone against her in a legal action which she was interested in, and she flew into such a violent passion that she broke an internal blood-vessel. Three days later she insisted on getting up from her bed, and when an old servant ventured a remonstration, the imperious woman said, "At your peril disobey me; I will get up and walk about the room; ring for the secretary to assist me." She arose, and complained of thirst, saying, "I could drink a glass of my fine Madeira, and eat a slice of toasted bread. I shall be quite well afterwards, but let it be a large glass of wine." It was brought; and she drank it, the duchess remarking, "I am perfectly recovered; I knew the Madeira would do me good. My heart feels oddly. I will have another glass." A further supply was brought, and when that, too, was drunk, she seated herself on her couch and fell into a sound sleep, from which, however, she never awoke, her death taking place on August 26, 1796.

So perished this extraordinary woman.

Macpherson, the Outlaw.

A STORY OF THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND, WHEREIN A GALLANT FREEBOOTER MEETS HIS DOOM FOR A CRIME UNKNOWN TO ENGLISH LAW.

"Sae rantin'ly, sae wantonly, sae dauntin'ly gae'd he,
He played a spring, and danced it roun' below the gallows tree."
—BURNS.

PART I.

HOW few who read the "Macpherson's Rant," by Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, or the far better version by Burns, the chorus of which we have quoted above, know aught of the source of these poets' inspiration or of the man whose career ended at the "gallows tree" therein alluded to? As we shall show in the course of this sketch of Macpherson's life, he was a man of singular, not to say extraordinary, genius, the outcome of his peculiar birth and surroundings. A gallant, straightforward, brave, and, we had almost said, honest, fellow he was, invariably following the dictates of his wild, intractable nature, but having a softer and more gentle side to his character, which made him beloved by all those with whom he was brought into close contact.

Like Robin Hood and Rob Roy, Jamie Macpherson was the idol of the people, while he was the detestation and despair of the authorities. A born leader of men, and possessed of indomitable pluck and daring, this man succeeded for nearly twenty years in defying the law, evading his enemies, and making for himself an undying name in the region where he dwelt.

James Macpherson was the natural son of Macpherson, of Invereshie, in Inverness, by a gipsy mother, a Celt on the one side, a Romany on the other. In weighing and estimating his character this rare combination must be taken into account. His father, so far as can be learnt, was chief of a small sept or division of the great Clan Macpherson, of which Cluny is still the head, and which itself is but a component part of the once dominant Clan Chattan—the wild-cat clan—which had the mountain-cat for its crest in all its branches, with the proud motto, "Touch not the cat but the glove," that is to say, without the glove. Therefore, on his father's side, Jamie's lineage was ancient and pure, while on the side of his mother, who could say how old it was? Doubtless it came straight down from the days when the wandering Hindoo tribe, from which the gipsies are descended, left their home in the Cashmere Hills to spread themselves over Europe, living amongst other races but mingling with none.

The youth of the future outlaw was spent at Invereshie with his father, who was doatingly fond of him, and he was fairly well educated by the family priest, his father being a true Catholic, and Jamie to his dying day professing the old faith. In truth, the boy was somewhat spoiled. He was given great liberty, and his wild, gipsy nature was allowed to have full scope. He was of a most generous disposition—free, careless, debonair. His passion for music was more than a fancy—it was a devotion—and he could write verses and compose melodies as true and untrammelled as the song of the skylark over his native heather.

It was when Jamie was fifteen that the first sorrow came into the lad's young life. Invereshie—the Scots invariably call landowners and farmers by the names of the places they hold—Invereshie died, and the laird's death was the worst misfortune which could have befallen the youth.

Of course, being illegitimate, he could not inherit his father's property, which passed to a cousin, and before the old-fashioned drinking bout, which always followed upon a funeral, was well over, Jamie had disappeared, bearing with him only his well-beloved fiddle. He had gone to the hills to seek his mother's folk and to cast in his lot with them. Thenceforth James Macpherson was a wanderer and an outcast upon the face of the earth.

In those days the gipsies, or "Egyptians," as people insisted upon calling this nomadic race, though they had not, nor ever had, as much connection with Egypt as Europeans generally, their statement that they came from the land of Little Egypt notwithstanding, were in far worse odour among the lowland Scots than even in England. Especially did this animosity prevail upon the Highland Border, for there they were accused of all manner of evil, including witchcraft. It was among a people so feared, if not hated, that Jamie's future life was to be spent; whereas, had Invereshie lived, he might have proved himself a decent and reputable member of the rough society of the Highlands, illegitimacy there not having so foul a taint attached to it as beyond the Tweed.

Over his shoulder his broadsword.

It was not till three years after this that the young man began to come prominently before the eyes of the people of those counties which run inland from the Moray Firth. His mother, a strong-willed, imperious woman, was queen of the tribe to which she belonged—the Browns*—and had never married, but remained all her life faithful to the memory of her son's father, whom she had really loved with the wild, overwhelming passion of her people. She was devoted wholly and solely to her boy, now as fine a specimen of male humanity as could be found from the Atlantic to the North Sea or from the Pentland to the Solway Firth. Wherever Jamie's errant footsteps took him there was she found also, directing, guiding, warning, shielding the gallant lad in all that he did for good or evil.

And, sooth to say, the young Romany was not faultless. His temper was quick and fiery. He was headstrong and wilful. The blood of the Celt and the Romany commingling, led him into many scrapes, and the authorities were beginning to speak of him as "dangerous."

It was the custom at that time for roving bands of "Egyptians" to quarter themselves during the winter upon some

*It is a somewhat curious fact that the gipsies have a peculiar fancy for calling themselves after colours. Thus, in England we have the Greys, while in Scotland there are the Browns, Whites, and Blacks. The last-mentioned in the West.

laird or farmer in the lower-lying lands towards the sea, without paying for house-room, taking possession of the barns and outbuildings, and never saying as much as "by your leave."

This constituted an offence in Scots law known as "sorning," but as the persons upon whom it was practised seldom complained, the "sorners" were hardly ever prosecuted, much less punished.

Young Jamie, having already risen to be leader of his band, which consisted of about five-and-twenty men, with women and children attached, had on several occasions rendered himself amenable to justice by reason of this system of enforced visits; yet, in fairness it must be added, he was invariably welcome. He was thoroughly open in his every action, paying a fair price for the provisions supplied him when he was able, and enlivening the long winter evenings with his fiddle, his songs, and his dancing. Thus the farmers and their households were generally glad to receive him, especially as he was seldom short of money.

stout hazel staff, and it was considered a menace when Macpherson and his followers descended among them armed to the teeth. So Jamie was looked upon with no favourable eye by the justices and sheriffs of those counties which he selected for his operations; but little did the reckless fellow care, continuing upon the road he had chosen to travel with as free a heart and as blithe a spirit as ever.

But things were not always to run as smoothly for poor Macpherson as they had been going. During his excursions to the neighbourhood of Keith, in Banffshire, a market town of considerable importance in those days, and still a thriving place of some five thousand inhabitants, he had incurred the deadly enmity of the laird of Braco. This gentleman's name was Alexander Duff, and the present Duke of Fife is a lineal descendant of his, one of the subsidiary titles of the duke being Baron Braco.

Tradition tells us that the feud began about a girl, one Mary Gordon, who lived with her father, a farmer, near the Balloch, a long hill, or rather, a couple of hills, which divide

THE HALBERDIERS ALL SCATTERED BEFORE HIM.

The money, too, was honourably come by, for Jamie was an expert horse-coper, and would buy Highland shelties (anglicé ponies) from their owners and breeders in the mountains, whence he would bring them down to the market towns of Keith or of Huntly, and dispose of them to excellent advantage.

Besides the "sorning," which had given offence to the authorities, there was another and, perhaps, more serious crime of which Jamie and his band were guilty. This was "the going up and doune the countrie armed and keeping mercats (markets) in ane hostile manner." The going up and down the country armed could not be denied; but every Highlander at that period was armed when he went abroad. Claymore, dirk and skene-dhu (skein-duibh, the black knife or knife-of-death, worn in the stocking), accompanied every Celtic gentleman when he went from home, with generally a silver-mounted brace of pistols in his belt superadded. The dhuinewassel would bear his targe and broadsword, and even the kern would have a weapon of some sort. It was not so in the peaceful market towns which lay between the mountains and the coast. There the farmers went about their business with no other weapon, offensive or defensive, than a

Banffshire from Aberdeenshire. Jamie turned out, it is said, to be the favoured swain, and in an encounter with Duff, whose attentions were not of an honourable nature, so mauled the laird that he swore to pursue his successful rival to the death. However that might be, there can be no doubt of the vindictiveness with which the laird sought to consummate Jamie's ruin. He procured a warrant for Macpherson's arrest from Nicolas Dunbar, the hereditary sheriff of Banff, who had purchased his office from George Ogilvie, Baron Banff, an ancestor of the present writer hereof, and set about laying Jamie by the heels. The young horse-coper, however, got wind of what was afoot, and, waylaying the bearer of the warrant, deforced him of it, escaping to the hills afterwards. This, of course, was a more heinous offence than any he had heretofore committed, and the consequence was that Macpherson was outlawed from the county of Banff. The sentence of outlawry pronounced upon him gave leave for any man to take his person, alive or dead, should he be found within the boundaries of the county.

Banffshire having been made too hot for him, Jamie betook himself to Badenoch, the district of Inverness-shire in which he was born, and there he took up his abode with his cousin

at Invereshie. This cousin appears to have been a thoroughly good fellow, though he was fond of a midnight raid upon the cattle of any neighbour with whom he was not on strictly good terms. This, however, was a common practice of the times, and was thought no crime, as retaliation would assuredly take place. It was "the simple rule, the ancient plan, that he should take who has the power, and he should keep who can."

Jamie joined his cousin in a raid, was captured, and lodged in Inverness Castle, then a prison, as it is now, though the old tolbooth has been pulled down and a modern gaol erected on the same site. To make his escape thence was an easy matter for the daring young outlaw, and once more he betook himself to the mountains. The Earl of Seaforth, chief of the Mackenzies, was then the hereditary sheriff of Inverness, and he lost no time in pronouncing sentence of outlawry for prison-breaking upon the reckless "Egyptian."

Two counties were now sealed against our hero, and we lose sight of him for a long time. Doubtless he was given shelter in the mountain fastnesses by those who appreciated his many excellent qualities. The loyalty of the Highlanders to their kinsfolk and those whom they love is proverbial, as witness the sojourn of Prince Charles Edward Stuart among them, though a price of £30,000 was waiting for any traitor who might betray him.

It must be remembered that all this time no more serious charges had been brought against Macpherson than those of sorning, going about armed, deforcing a warrant-officer, and prison-breaking. It was not pretended he had ever stolen a pony, a stirk (ox), or even a sheep. His hands were clean in those matters, and as for murder, nothing had ever been further from his mind. The fact was, Macpherson was a product of the times in which he lived, and was the victim of prejudice on the part of those responsible for order. The circumstances of his birth stamped themselves on his manhood. Precluded from inheriting the estate upon which he was brought up, he was thrown back upon a despised and wronged race, the Ishmaelites of Europe, and, rising by his own native genius to a conspicuous position among his mother's people, he became an object of fear and jealousy to the petty lairds who ruled their tenants and dependants with a rod of iron. They looked upon the attachment of the common people to the handsome young gipsy leader as an affront to themselves, and, instigated by Braco, they set their faces sternly against him. At the same time, it must be understood that this dislike did not obtain in the Highlands, where Jamie was adored by rich and poor alike, but only in the northern lowlands, where the spirit of clanship no longer existed. Once upon a time the country down to the coast-fringe had been as distinctly Highland as the more southern and western districts, but agriculture had made big strides there within a couple of centuries, and with the peaceful art of husbandry had come civilisation and an amenity to the laws of the land. Still, the lairds held great power, though they had not the affection of the people as in the days gone by, when the chiefs were the fathers of the clan and the old patriarchal system prevailed. The Duffs, the Red Ogilvies of the North—of the same parent stock as the Ogilvies of Airlie, but long since separated—and the Gordons were the principal proprietors in the country we have alluded to, though the Gordons, it is true, stretched their authority far up into the mountains. Aberdeenshire, east of Benachie and the upper waters of the Dee, the Don, and the Deveron, was entirely lowland, and split up among the Forbeses, the Farquharsons, the Hays, and the Frasers of Saltoun, with a host of smaller proprietors or heritors, as the old Scottish term goes.

Jamie's fame had now been published far and wide over all the land north of Tay, and the lowland chiefs of the districts of Buchan, Strathbogie, Strathisla, and a portion of Strathspey were banded against him. There were, however, some honourable exceptions to the confederation, distinguished among whom were the laird of Grant, chief of Clan Grant, and the Gordons of Achanachie and Pitlurg, the last-mentioned being of the original stock of the Gordons, the Cocks of the North, and the progenitors of the Marquesses of Huntly, the present Marquess being the chief of Clan Gordon.

It is necessary to mention all these facts to understand the position of Macpherson at this time. While under the protection of the Highland chieftains he was safe, but should he venture into the territory of those hostile to him the chances were that he would be immediately arrested. Although no warrant was out against him in Aberdeenshire, or in Moray, or in Nairn, yet the likelihood was that the lairds of these counties, who were inimical to him, would take the law into their own hands, and deliver him up to the authorities of Banff or Inverness.

Jamie must have spent some years in the glens and straths of the higher regions, or if he ventured out from among them he must have been so disguised as to have been unrecognised by his enemies, for all trace of him is lost until he suddenly appeared on Deeside with his band, making his way down the river during the winter months. At length he boldly established himself on a farm at Kincardine-o'-Neil, within a few miles of the Granite City. It was a case of sorning, of course, but Jamie and his friends were made happily welcome by the genial farmer, who purchased some of his ponies, paying for them in kind by giving Macpherson and his followers house-room in his barn and provisions for subsistence.

Hearing that the noted outlaw was in such close proximity to Aberdeen, the provost and bailies of the ancient city took alarm, and sent out messengers to the farmer remonstrating with him for harbouring such a notorious character. Notwithstanding this, the farmer, who was delighted with Jamie's society and the amusement it afforded him during the usually long and dreary winter evenings, declined to accede to the request of the Aberdeen magistrates that Macpherson should be sent back whence he came.

When Jamie was told of the visit of the emissaries from Aberdeen he laughed, and swore in his reckless fashion that he would brave the bailies in their own town, alone and undisguised.

In the meantime, however, the magistrates had communicated in fear and trembling with Nicolas Dunbar, of Banff, who in his turn sent a messenger with all speed to Duff, of Braco, the outlaw's arch enemy. This messenger bore another warrant, empowering Braco to take the body of James Macpherson, the "Egyptian," alive or dead, wheresoever he might find him, and bring him before him (Dunbar) at the courthouse of Banff.

Armed with this portentous document, Braco set forth post haste for Aberdeen, a distance of some sixty miles. It was winter, as has been said, but there had been no snow for some time, and the ground was hard and frozen. Duff, therefore, made excellent progress, and arrived in Aberdeen with his precious warrant on the second day. The magistrates were overjoyed at sight of the legal instrument, and took Braco, metaphorically, to their capacious bosoms.

It was at once resolved that a posse of officers, led by the captain of the city guard, should be sent out to Kincardine-o'-Neil, bearing Nicolas Dunbar's warrant, to capture Macpherson on the following day and bring him in to the tolbooth of Aberdeen.

The necessity for this course, however, was rendered futile by the appearance of Jamie in the morning, dressed in full Highland costume, and bearing the huge two-handed sword which he always carried, and of which more will be told anon, over his shoulder. He was also preceded by his piper, Peter Brown. Carelessly confident in there being no sentence of outlawry passed upon him in the county of Aberdeen, and that no warrant for his arrest had been there issued, he had marched from Kincardine-o'-Neil right into the heart of the city in a wild spirit of bravado. The lower classes, and even some of the wealthier citizens, who admired his courage, followed him with cheers, but by far the greater portion of the inhabitants looked on pityingly or exultantly as their feelings prompted, for they knew what was in store for him.

Proudly Jamie advanced, the dames of the burghers and their daughters peeping fearfully from behind the curtains of their windows with glances of ill-disguised admiration at the handsome outlaw.

Suddenly, just before he reached the Castle gate, two bodies of the city guard, previously posted in the Guestrow and the Fishrow, on opposite sides of the way, rushed out upon him, and Jamie was pinned by the arms before he could bring his huge sword into play. In the confusion Peter Brown escaped, and it was well for his leader that he did so.

Macpherson was quickly bound and hurried across to the tolbooth, where he was incarcerated in a cell at the top of an outside stone staircase, while the provost and bailies, with Braco, met in the council-chamber and rejoiced over their extraordinary success. Duff demanded that the prisoner should be at once handed over to him, under a strong escort, to conduct him to Banff, but there were certain formalities to be gone through first. Macpherson could not be transferred from the custody of the Aberdeen authorities without the sanction of the sheriff, who was then in Edinburgh attending the High Court of Justiciary. Afraid of acting illegally, the magistrates declined to listen to Braco's protestations that the warrant which he held from Nicolas Dunbar was quite sufficient to authorise them in delivering up the captive. He would be quite safe in the tolbooth, they said, until the

sheriff's return, which would be within the week, or, at farthest, ten days.

Chafing at the delay, to which he was unaccustomed in his own county, where he to a certain extent ruled the roost, Duff retired sulkily to his lodging, there to await with what patience remained to him the return of the sheriff from Edinburgh.

Meanwhile, Peter Brown, the piper, hurried off to Kincardine-o'-Neil, and there took counsel with Jamie's mother. She was growing an old woman now, but retained all her faculties unimpaired, and her decision was at once taken.

"You must take the swiftest sheltie we have," she said, "and ride off to Invereshie without delay. Tell him what has happened, and if Donald Macpherson has a drop of the old laird's blood in him he'll come back with you like the wild cat to his mate."

She added that it would be useless for the band to attempt an open rescue, for they would quickly be overpowered and every man of them locked up in the same prison as her son.

It was a tremendous ride for anyone to undertake at that season of the year, when all the uplands and mountains were deep with snow, but Brown did not shrink from the duty which lay before him. He roughened the pony's shoes and set off up Deeside as hard as the sturdy little steed could pelt. Past Braemar he rode, and then across the mighty mountains which converge at the point where Banffshire and Aberdeenshire, Perthshire and Inverness-shire all meet. The bridle-paths he took were choked with snow-wreaths, luckily hard frozen on the top, and the sure-footed little animal skimmed over them with ease. Not once did the brave fellow lose his way, for the gipsy knows his landmarks too well to deviate from the path he has mapped out for himself. Thrice he stopped at lonely sheilings, where kindly shepherds gave him of their scanty store and allowed him to rest for an hour or two on their beds of heather, and once he looked in at a whisky still that no gauger had ever seen, where he had a dram of the potent stuff which would have sent another man reeling. Beyond these halts he never drew rein till, on the third day, the hardy little horse stood trembling from exhaustion at the door of Invereshie Castle.

In four hours he was astride another rough-coated pony, with Invereshie by his side. He was better mounted this time, and Donald Macpherson had a still stronger steed under him, so that ground was covered rapidly.

Aberdeen was reached on the fifth day from the arrest, and having stabled their ponies the laird and Peter went round to have a look at the tolbooth. By inquiring of a shock-headed turnkey whom they met close to the gaol they discovered the exact portion of the prison where Jamie lay, and then retired to rest in a lodging which they found hard by.

Invereshie had well matured his plans. He was perfectly well aware that it would be useless to seek clemency for his cousin. He had learned all particulars concerning the attitude of the magistrates towards him from his garrulous landlord, for the capture of Macpherson was the talk of Aberdeen, as well it might be, considering the reputation Jamie had acquired. Donald was told that the sheriff was expected home in a couple of days, when the prisoner would be handed over to Braco for the purpose of being carried to Banff under strong escort. He also gleaned that Jamie's great sword was being exhibited in the council-chamber as a trophy. This last piece of intelligence was carefully noted by Invereshie, who dropped no hint as to the relationship existing between himself and the captive. Peter Brown was equally reticent, but, like that famous bird, the sailor's parrot, he was a good 'un to think.

Invereshie and Peter were up long before daylight, engaged in carrying out the scheme which the former had developed in his brain. The first thing to be done was to procure three swift horses. Highland ponies would be of no use to them in the flight which must follow the rescue, if it were properly effected. Peter Brown knew of a dealer who frequented the markets farther north to buy shelties, and with whom Macpherson had been well acquainted. They took their two ponies to this man, selling them to him, and purchasing three fleet steeds in their place. Donald Macpherson was not sparing with the cash. They then sounded the horse-dealer as to his feelings regarding Jamie, and finding him remarkably friendly, they entrusted him with their plans for the prisoner's rescue. He shook his head, considering them too daring, but all the same promised to be at the corner of Broad Street by dawn with the horses. That business being successfully accomplished, Peter Brown broke into the council-chamber and recovered the outlaw's famous sword. This he concealed as well as he could under his plaid, and quickly followed Invereshie to the tolbooth.

A stout turnkey, muffled to the eyes, was dozing over a clear peat fire built against the wall at the foot of the stone staircase which led to Macpherson's cell, so that no one could pass up without his waking. The first grey streaks of a frosty dawn were already in the sky, and one or two early stragglers were shivering in the Castle gate. Two men of the city guard, armed with halberds, were pacing up and down outside the courthouse adjoining the tolbooth.

Invereshie and Peter Brown, making a short circuit by Huxter Row, approached the stone staircase presided over by the dozing turnkey. In an instant the laird's plaid was flung over the man's head and arms and tied in a loose knot behind. Giving him a push which sent him rolling in the kennel, Donald Macpherson and the piper sprang up the steps. The door was a strong, iron-studded, oaken one, and seeing it would be useless to attempt to force it, Invereshie bethought him that the turnkey, who was bellowing like a bull, and further entangling himself in his efforts to cast off the plaid, would have the keys.

At one bound he sprang down the steps, and, cutting the man's leathern girdle with his dirk, possessed himself of two ponderous keys which were hanging there. While he was employed upon this, however, the turnkey's outcries had attracted the stragglers from the Castle gate and the halberdiers from the courthouse, and Invereshie found his return to the top of the stairs barred.

Nothing daunted, he flung the keys up to Peter Brown, who in a few seconds had the two doors between him and Macpherson's cell open.

Some of the crowd, which was rapidly increasing, now took part with the rescuers, and a free fight ensued between the two factions, those for and those against the prisoner.

In the meantime, Brown was deftly knocking the shackles from Jamie's hands and feet with a hammer he had brought for the purpose.

While the crowd below were swaying and scrambling in their endeavours to get at each other's throats, and Invereshie was holding the halberdiers in check, a stalwart butcher appeared, who seemed to be a foe. He fought his way through the crowd, showering his blows indiscriminately. Gaining the stairs, he sprang up them; but Jamie by that time was free, and issuing at the moment from the cell door, dealt the butcher a well-aimed blow between the eyes which sent him sprawling to the bottom.

"Curse you!" roared the big fellow, "I was on your side!"

Jamie, with his great sword, restored to him by his faithful henchman, flourishing above his head, now leapt down the staircase. So formidable was his appearance that the mob, halberdiers and all, scattered before him. Seeing them thus paralysed, Invereshie ran as fast as he could to Broad Street, whither his cousin and Brown followed with all possible speed. The horse-dealer had kept his word, and was there with the nags. In a few seconds they were mounted and away. Some puny efforts were made by tradesmen, who had got wind of what was about, to impede their flight by stretching webs of cloth across the street, but these were slashed in two by Macpherson's sword, which he could wield with one hand as easily as with two, and on they dashed for the open country. They crossed the Don by "Balgownie's black brig," sung of by Byron more than a hundred years after, and then turning sharply to the left followed the course of the stream upwards till it led them to the glens of Strathdon, where they were safe beyond pursuit.

The main incidents of this escape are preserved till to-day in the archives of the Aberdeen municipality, and have often been referred to by the writers and historians of the north.

That winter Macpherson's mother died, and in the spring we hear of him again at the head of a band computed to consist of thirty men; but he was now greatly changed. Broken and desperate, for seven long years he kept Braco and his bloodhounds at bay, swooping down occasionally from the mountains on a market-day to the astonishment of the lairds and farmers, who wondered at his daring, knowing the forces that were arrayed against him. He was an altered man; but few had a word to say against him, and many of the poor spoke of him with tears of gratitude. Yet he was oftener among them than they were aware of, for frequently, disguised as a shepherd or drover, he would descend from the strongholds of the hills to visit the lassie over whom he had first incurred Braco's hatred, and who had remained faithful to him through all his vicissitudes.

At last the end was fast approaching.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

Death and the Idol.

THE story of ALIS LESTAIRE: A courtesan murdered by her old lover, ALPHONSE BRITOT.

"Oh, Idol, I made thee
Out of old years;
I knelt and I prayed thee,
In sorrow and fears,
To raise me, and low thou hast fallen,
Bespattered with blood and with tears."

—ANON.

THE demi-monde of Paris have been in the habit from time immemorial of forming colonies, living in societies, and appropriating for their special habitation certain portions of the city. These districts become naturally notorious, and are never mentioned but in connection with one of their fair and frail inhabitants.

It should, however, be mentioned that the several districts of Paris have a wonderful way of changing their character, much in the same fashion as the French population have of altering their form of government; so that a neighbourhood that was infested under monarchical rule with pimps, bauds, cuckolds, and panders, may in the course of a few years become a promenade and a sanctuary for the respectable ladies of the Republic. Some forty years ago the Rue des Déchargeus was undesirably notorious for the many women of easy virtue who inhabited its large, rather old-fashioned houses.

One day there came into this society Alis Lestaire, she around whom this remarkable history of chance and crime is enwoven.

In the autumn of 1861 a young woman of quiet appearance, heavily veiled, and modestly attired, called at No. 14, Rue des Déchargeus.

The lady who owned the house was a fat, unpleasant-looking individual, who had in her time been everything, from a lady's-maid to a "cocotte"; she asked her visitor on what errand she had come.

"I hear you let apartments," answered Alis Lestaire (for this was the young woman's name), in a tremulous voice. "I want to take two rooms, madame, if it is convenient to you."

The stout lady stared hard at Alis with a scrutinising eye; she had had a vast experience, and could tell at a glance whether or no a lodger would prove profitable.

In the present instance her visitor was so heavily veiled that Madame Carnot could form no opinion of the attractiveness of her features; she noticed that she was somewhat slim of stature, which did not promise well, but, for all that, madame never threw away an opportunity of possible profit, so she invited Alis to step inside, ostensibly to view the rooms, in reality to get a nearer look at her face and figure.

"You must follow me, my dear," she said, and led the way up two flights of thickly-carpeted stairs.

She threw the doors of the empty rooms open and invited Alis's inspection.

The young woman loosened her shawl and lifted her veil.

Madame Carnot could not stifle an exclamation of astonishment.

Alis was very beautiful, her face was rather pale, but her eyes were of the deepest and most lustrous blue, fringed with long, dark sweeping lashes, that lay on cheeks pearl-coloured with a tinge of faintest rose; her lips were red and shaped a little droopingly, and her hair, which was of the richest auburn, escaped in wavy clusters from its loose bands, and added a crowning glory to the girl's exceptional, almost ethereal loveliness.

Apart from her features there was in Alis's face a something, an expression, an indescribable suggestion of sorrow and a wounded heart, that lent to her the exceptional beauty of which we have spoken, but which we have not attempted to define.

Madame Carnot saw this, was at a loss to explain it, indeed, could not at all understand the admiration with which the girl's singular charm inspired her; but, for all that, the charm existed, there was no denying its potency, and the old woman in a moment saw that Alis would be an advantageous lodger.

Her manner towards her visitor at once underwent a remarkable change, she mingled subservient politeness with fond endearments, and protested that she would rather let the rooms to Alis than to anyone in the world.

The girl laughed and went over to the mirror and looked at herself in the glass.

"Poor old face," said she, in a half-mocking, half-sorrowful manner, "you must still be a little beautiful. See what a welcome you have procured me from madame here."

The old lady of the house was a trifle disconcerted.

"The child jokes," said she, with a forced giggle. "Old! she calls herself old! Mademoiselle, how wicked thou art to call that face—so beautiful, so young—old! It is a reproach to heaven."

Alis turned round from the mirror, the smile died on her lips, and she stood regarding her companion with a look, half of pity, half of contempt.

"My face," said she, "you admire it, madame?"

"Assuredly, my dear, who could do otherwise. You should thank——"

"Ah! I know what you are about to say. I should thank the good God for giving it to me. Listen to me, madame. I curse the good God for His gift; I have had cause to curse Him, and I curse Him again! Oh! why was I not born hideous and deformed?"

She stopped, with her hand pressed to her forehead, as if trying to subdue the anguish of painful recollections, and Madame Carnot stood dumb before this strange outburst of passionate regret.

Alis suddenly took off her bonnet with an expressive shrug of her shoulders, drew a little silk purse from her bosom, and, taking a couple of gold pieces, threw them on to the bed.

"I take your rooms, madame. Here is your first week's rent."

"Oh! my dear, if it is inconvenient to you——"

"It is not inconvenient to me. My luggage I will bring later myself."

"Mademoiselle, I am rejoiced. I would rather you take my rooms than anybody."

"Why? Because I have a pretty face—or a face that was once pretty?"

"How curiously you put things, child! Nobody could see you without falling in love with you."

"Indeed! How long do you think it will last?"

"I do not understand."

"This—this face you call beautiful."

"You are young, mademoiselle."

"Yes, I suppose I am young, and yet I feel—good God, how old I feel!"

"You must not give way to fancies, child. Goodness knows you will wear yourself to a shadow if you do."

"That would never do. Men like a plump figure, don't they."

The mockery in the words was plain enough to be apparent even to Madame Carnot.

"Ah, well!" she reflected, as she went downstairs, chinking the two gold pieces in her hand, "so many of them are like that at first. They fret and chafe until they forget how to. But she's a nice enough girl, and the rent should be regular with a face like that!"

Alis had thrown herself on the bed when the door had closed upon her landlady, and there for a time she remained, her face pressed close down between the white-frilled pillows.

The room was very still, and would have been wholly silent but for the half-choked sobs of the weeping girl.

Presently Alis got up, and, taking a small flask out of her hand-bag, poured with trembling hands some brandy into a glass. She drank it neat, at one draught, and when Madame

Carnot appeared later with a cup of tea and a biscuit, she had washed away all traces of her tears, and was in a light, friendly, if not merry mood.

So Alis Lestaire finally took up her quarters in the Rue des Déchargeus, amongst the lost and the degraded of womankind, the last recruit to that ever-swelling, ever-dwindling sisterhood of sorrow, who are to-day smiling joyously in a riot of roses, and to-morrow sleeping in obscure graves, unnumbered, unregretted, and forgotten. Alis was exclusive in her habits, did not seek the friendship of her fellows, nay, even avoided the society of her more prosperous sisters, two of whom occupied the rooms below her; but, on the other hand, showed an affection for a girl who lived in a top attic, and who was rapidly dying of consumption. This girl, whose name was Antoinette, had once been good-looking; the last vestiges of beauty were still visible in her diseased, wasted face, but now she found it a matter of difficulty to provide the means to keep life in her shrunken body, and a roof over her unhappy head, and Alis was frequently forthcoming with her rent.

This girl had no regrets for the past, no sorrow for the present, no fear for the future.

"I've lived a fearful life, and enjoyed it," she used to say, between her spasms of coughing, with a hollow laugh, and her one regret now was that she was unable to spend her few remaining days in revel and licentious dissipation.

One day Alis met her on the stairs, going out with rouge thick on her cavernous cheeks, the bones of which threatened every moment to pierce their thin covering of almost transparent skin, and with her eyes sunken and unnatural, luminous as they were, stained round the fringes with bistre.

She had padded out her shrivelled breasts to give herself the appearance of a fine-figured woman, and her seemingly ample proportions contrasted in hideous incongruity with her thin, wasted, ghost-like head.

She was half-drunk, and confided to Alis her belief that she would be dead in a week.

Alis hurried away to a neighbouring café, where she drank off two glasses of absinthe to get a little warmth into her heart, which the vision of Antoinette had chilled with dread and horror.

"How long, how long," she mused, "before I become even as she is? What lies before me? Disease, destitution, and death, more horrible than all! Ah, God! what a fate is ours!"

Alis was mistaken; could she but for one moment have lifted the veil that separates the future from the present, she would have known that for her was reserved a fate even more terrible than that of the miserable Antoinette.

Two weeks later the latter was found dead on her bed, a bottle (half-emptied) of brandy by her side, and blood all over her breasts.

She had expired in a sudden convulsion of pain, and Madame Carnot explained that several gentlemen had complained of the incessant coughing during the previous night.

She herself had been summoned by Marguerite Maret, one of her lodgers, who had asked her on behalf of her visitor to go and try to silence Antoinette. She had gone up to the attic, but the coughing suddenly ceased, so she had not disturbed the girl.

Alis paid the expenses of her burial, for which, by some, she was accounted a fool: but as Marguerite Maret said to Madame Carnot, "We all of us are a bit foolish at first."

For several months after Antoinette's death no incident sufficiently important to chronicle occurred at No. 14, Rue des Déchargeus.

The course of Alis's life ran its even tenour of uneventful iniquity. During the day she spent most of her time at the open window, looking out on the dull street, with its few pedestrians, and carts, and carriers. Several idle personages noticed the pale, beautiful face that looked down with such calm, sorrowful eyes from the half-opened window, and remarked upon the singularity of such a woman being "of the town."

In fact one student—a disciple of Alfred de Musset—wrote some verses to the "lady of the window," which he sent to Antoinette. Madame Carnot received them; reflected that rhymesters were generally unprofitable lovers, and burnt the poem without it ever reaching Alis, whereupon the student, seeing that the lady of the window manifested no interest in him, ceased to promenade the Rue des Déchargeus, and wrote some other verses to a waitress at a café, who subsequently became his mistress.

And now for the present we must leave Alis, a soiled lily, entangled in snares and poisonous weeds, and turn our attention to a gentleman named Alphonse Britot, who is fated to play an important—perhaps the most important—part in this tragedy.

We must give him our careful attention, for without Alphonse Britot there would be no tragedy at all.

He is introduced to us sitting at a table in a fashionable restaurant, drinking Rhenish wine, and smoking a long, thin cheroot.

A tall, well-made man, with shoulders that stoop slightly, dressed somewhat negligently, with an open collar and a loose stock; his hair dark and curly, and his face, despite its long, flowing whiskers, inclined to be womanish. He had on the whole a dissipated appearance, and the air of a careless dandy. Alphonse made wry faces over his Rhenish; it was sour, and Alphonse loved sweet things.

He ordered a different wine, and fell to musing—a constant habit of his—over "the confusions of a wasted youth."

He looked round him, at the men and women chatting

"I curse the good God for his gift."

and laughing at the various tables, idly wondering what this woman and that man were saying and thinking.

Several women looked at him expressively, but he did not invite their advances.

"Years ago," thought he, "I should have been flattered at so much notice, but I know now that a monkey, with a well-lined purse, would attract these women. Still, I was happier when I thought differently. Ah, me, for the illusions of youth."

A band began to play waltz music, and a gentleman seated near to Alphonse informed him that the particular piece the band was then executing was called "Love Immortal."

"Love!" cried Alphonse with a sneer, "what mockery! Love, you can see it, sir, at every table in this hall, in the gutters of the streets, in the dancing halls and the brothels. Love, indeed!"

The gentleman was silenced, thinking Alphonse a very odd fellow. The gentleman was a respectable bourgeois citizen, who had a great fear of wandering lunatics, and who occasionally wrote letters to the papers, suggesting the urgent need of strengthening asylums; so that it is not surprising that he did not engage Alphonse in further conversation.

It may be thought from the foregoing remarks that Alphonse Britot was a light cynic of the customary Gaelic pattern; but this was not so. Alphonse was a profound idealist.

Love and life have no bitterer critics than partially disillusionised idealists, for what idealist is ever wholly disillu-

sioned? Do they not to the very last cling with the obstinacy of despair to an illusionary ideal that rests upon the love-sanctified altar of unalterable belief?

Alphonse Britot stood amidst the ruins of many ideals, a broken visionary, sad with the unstability of dreams; a man who clung with the tenacity of a miser, holding to the last remnants of scattered wealth, to one last unabased idol of womanhood.

In his youth he had lived in a pastoral, sequestered district of France; he had been brought up by priests and gentle women, his mind had been nurtured on the purest and most idealistic works and doctrines, and he had fallen in love—wholly, irretrievably in love—with a young village girl, whose beauty of person was only exceeded by the beauty of her intellect.

The love that young Alphonse had experienced had been a wildly ethereal, dream-woven passion, that possessed many of the elements of religious worship and adoration. It had afforded to Alphonse the most perfect moments of ecstatic bliss in his life; moments spent half in reverent awe, half in wild-throbbing delirium of love in the presence of his all-crown his long search with success; little did he know that he was that night once more to meet Alis Lestaire; little did he dream of the manner of their meeting!

Thinking of his long-lost Alis, he became sad, and could find no better means to drown remembrance than in the Lethal cup at his elbow.

He drank deeply.

He had not been in Paris for some years, and the wild, pulsating revelry of the rose-hearted city intoxicated him and turned him giddy.

The smoke, the music, the lights, the talk, and the laughter, all mingled in one vast panorama of gay shadows, that were ever whirling and twirling in a strange fantastic dance of life and death; he felt himself drawn into the mazes of the unthinking throng; he became one of the light-living shadows himself.

After a time he paid his reckoning and left the restaurant, and staggered unsteadily into the street.

In search of amusement he stood before the entrance of a villainous dancing hall, debating inwardly upon the advisability of entering.

IN A MOMENT THE BED CURTAINS WERE IN A BLAZE.

beloved; moments he knew he could never again experience on earth.

He had gone away on a journey to some relations, and on returning home had found his loved one fled, departed with her parents; where, or when, no one could tell.

He sought her everywhere and anywhere; for years and years he sought this fair embodiment of love's young dream, and he sought in vain!

During the unfruitful quest he found many things, all of which discoveries soured and embittered his erstwhile idealistic disposition.

"I knew one wholly good woman, and I have lost her, but she demands my worship still," he often said, and this day in the smoke-polluted café, amidst the laughing women with their seductive eyes, and the leering votaries of pleasure, Alphonse took from his breast-pocket the miniature—the faded portrait of a girl—and gazed upon the faint presentment of his one unbroken ideal. The miniature was poorly executed, but for all that the face was undeniably beautiful; the half-childish face of a girl, with wonderful violet eyes and golden hair.

"Ah, dear heart," sighed Alphonse, "I shall never cease to love you, most perfect, most pure of all women, though I shall never see you again."

Little did he know that fate had ordained that night to

"Why not?" said he, "it will serve to pass a few hours."

The rain began to patter down.

This decided him; he took out a coin, paid it over a little counter to an old woman, and went in.

The hall was crowded; women in various stages of déshabillé and drunkenness, dancing in wild, uncontrolled animation to the strains of a large band, who performed on a dais erected in the centre of the building.

At the sides of the hall numerous tables were scattered, and at one of these Alphonse sat down. Alis Lestaire was sitting on the knee of an old man in the bar when Marguerite Maret passed her on the arm of a friend.

"Alis," said she, "there's a provincial come in; he's sitting alone over there He's worth twenty pounds to you."

Alis jumped up from the old man's knee, gave him a light kiss, and went into the hall, where she saw Alphonse sipping absinthe, and watching the dancers. She sat down beside him, and slipped her little hand into his with a confiding gesture.

He turned, and for a moment he felt as if about to faint. It seemed that he had seen a ghost of his beloved Alis. The woman noticed his emotion.

"I startled you," she said, with a laugh. "Well, well, you shouldn't drink absinthe with a bad heart."

Alphonse recovered the use of speech. "I have not a bad

heart," said he huskily, "but a very good one. Little one, what do you drink?"

She named a wine, and he called the waiter and procured it. Alis grew more familiar.

"Here's to your health, my friend, and our better acquaintance," said she, sipping her wine with laughing eyes.

Alphonse began to feel strangely uneasy, the tones of her voice seemed to him familiar; echoes of the most beautiful music that had ever thrilled his soul, even as her face was an echo of the most beautiful face his eyes had ever beheld.

Certainly the likeness was extraordinary.

"Why dost thou stare at me so strangely?" said Alis, moving her chair close to his, and putting up her lips to be kissed.

"Why do I stare? Oh, because you are so like somebody, I used to know—somebody I used to love."

"What! you do not love me? Thank you," cried Alis, with another laugh, inwardly reflecting that her companion was very provincial, and certainly worth twenty pounds.

After a time they left the dancing hall, and called a coach.

Why Alphonse stayed with his companion he could not exactly say, except that he felt a strong fascination in the presence of a person who so resembled his ideal love, even though she was—well, what she was. They drove straight to Alis's lodgings, where the door was opened by Madame Carnot.

"Ah, my dear madame," said Alis, "let me introduce to you my brother from the country."

"Charmed, I'm sure. Your servant, monsieur," said the old woman, with a grin. She held a lamp at the bottom of the stairs, and as they passed her, extended her left hand with a grimace towards Alphonse.

He smiled, and slipped a coin into it.

"Gold!" exclaimed Madame Carnot. "Certainly that girl is gaining experience. Well, here's to her country brother, and may the good God send her many such."

Alphonse was now in Alis's room. He looked round with amused curiosity to see whether this girl, who so strangely resembled his ideal, lived in the same surroundings as her sisters.

Yes, it was all the same; the untidy room strewn with female wearing apparel, the half-finished supper on the table, the tawdry bed, with the highly-coloured coverlet, and the ribbons on the pillows.

Alphonse felt disappointed. He sat down before the fire, took a glass of wine and lit a cheroot, and stared at a text which hung over the mantelpiece. He had now arrived at that peculiar state of drunkenness when the soul becomes maudlin, prone to sentimental reflection, and addicted to tears.

He thought of his beautiful Alis, the ideal woman, and the creature who so strangely resembled her, now sitting on the bed in a loose wrap, sipping from her glass, and making eyes at him across the room.

Good God! why was there such an extraordinary resemblance between the harlot and the virgin love of his youth? Suppose Alis, the all perfect, the all pure, had become even as this woman had? No, impossible!—the thought was monstrous! He was despicable for thinking it.

And yet—and yet, why did the woman with the painted face have those eyes, and that ever unforgettable smile?

"What is your name?" he asked.

"My name? Alis Lestaire."

The words came forth slow, distinct, and unmistakable.

Alis Lestaire! That his Alis! That the ideal of his dreams!

An exclamation of horror and incredulity died in his throat; the room swam before him, everything was shadowy and obscure. He felt he was fainting, and with a great effort strove to master his emotions. The sweat broke out on his brow in hot, scalding drops, but his heart was quite cold. He felt a terrible pain in his chest, as if something was bursting. He noticed that the rain pattered against the window, and the wind howled. Oh, what a night of desolation; the night of his lost, his greatest idol's abasement!

He began to ask questions in a voice which sounded foreign to him and far away.

"Your name is Alis Lestaire?"

"Yes, my dear."

"Then you lived once at L——"

"My God! how do you know?"

"I lived there myself. I knew you. My name is Alphonse Britot."

"You knew me! Your name is Alphonse Britot? I never heard the name before in my life"

He burst into a horrible laugh, and rose to his feet.

"Look at me," he cried, nearing the lamp, and pushing his hair back from his face, "you of the short memory. Do you know me now?"

"No, I never saw you before. But you frighten me, you are so wild."

"Frighten you! I will be calm. I will not disturb this temple of love—oh, abominable word!—and its nocturnal votaries." Then, in strangely calm, measured accents, he related to her the history of his youth and manhood, and showed her her own miniature.

Alis was in tears.

"Yes, I remember you now. You were one of the young men who said they loved me. But there were so many of them. I ran away with one, and here I am. Oh, God, I wish I had never seen you again! You recall that which I wish to be forgotten."

Suddenly she grew very frightened. Alphonse had the look of a madman; his eyes stood out from his head, blazing with wrath, he was advancing towards her with something in his hand.

"What are you going to do?" she cried in terror.

He sprang upon her, and put his right hand over her mouth, stifling her screams.

"Listen," he hissed in her ear. "You have been my ideal through life, the last thing that made life worth living, the only pure and perfect idol that I have ever adored. I loved you, I worshipped you as something surpassingly good and holy. I find you transformed into a harlot, one of the gutter loves of Paris. No, don't struggle; I am strong tonight, and it is useless. You must hear me out. You have destroyed me, utterly, irrevocably destroyed—killed all that was best and noblest in me. I will finish the work of the gods, and will complete the abasement of my idol. I will kill you!"

The sweat of terror moistened the paint on Alis's face; she could not scream, but she could struggle, and with a superhuman effort she slid her lithe form half out of the clinging garment, and slipped to her knees.

He raised a sharp, glittering knife, stuck it between his teeth, clasped his left hand over her mouth, seized the knife with his right, and then, with the strength of madness, dug it deep down between her quivering breasts.

In her terrible death agony she bit into his hand; he wrenched the dripping knife out of her bleeding bosom; she fell, face foremost, to the ground, her forehead striking a side table and knocking over the lamp.

The oil ran out on to the floor, and in a moment the bed-curtains were in a blaze.

Alis dug her hands into the carpet, and writhing in excruciating agony, rolled over on to her back. She was dead.

"See, see, ye mighty powers of heaven!" shrieked Alphonse, throwing the knife from him. "See, my idol has fallen by my own hands. By my own hands I have abased that which I built in dreams."

He fled the house.

Some time afterwards Marguerite Maret dreamt she was in hell. She awoke with a start to find her room filling with smoke. With a scream she jumped from her bed, and heard someone knocking heavily at the street door, and the sound of shouts and tramping feet.

She ran downstairs and opened the door to a crowd of people, attracted by the smoke issuing from the upper windows. Madame Carnot was aroused from a drunken sleep, and followed the firemen, who had already arrived, into Alis's room.

They found her lying in a thick pool of blood on the floor. The lamp had gone over, the bed-curtains had been burnt, and the bed was smouldering.

The fire was speedily got under, but Alis's murderer was never apprehended.

Six months after, however, Alphonse Britot, on his death-bed, confessed to the crime, and it is to his detailed narrative, together with that of Madame Carnot, that we owe the present history.

The facts of the case were soon pieced together; Alphonse's parents, the amiable citizen who met the murderer in the restaurant, the keeper of the dancing-hall, and several others coming forward and attesting to the truth of the dead man's depositions.

Ideals are many of them flimsy things, and easily broken; idols rest upon tottering pedestals, and are easily shattered.

Happily, their abasement is seldom associated with such tragic circumstances as the idol of Alphonse Britot; happily, few ideals are fated to meet with so terrible a doom as was that of Alis Lestaire.

The Rue des Déchargeus is now a very respectable thoroughfare.

AUTHENTIC GHOST STORIES.

"Or in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear!"
—SHAKESPEARE. "Midsummer Night's Dream," Act V. Sc. 1.

PART II.

A FEW anecdotes with regard to haunted houses, though rather beside the immediate object of this work, may yet prove interesting, as illustrative of the general subject of ghosts, and the degree of belief to be put in such supernatural visitors.

One of the best stories which we recollect to have heard of a haunted house is that which is related of the Royal Palace at Woodstock, in the year 1649, when the commissioners sent from London by the Long Parliament to take possession of it, and efface all the emblems of royalty about it, were fairly driven out by their fear of the devil and the annoyances they suffered from a roguish cavalier, who played the imp to admiration. The commissioners, dreading at that time no devil, arrived at Woodstock on the 13th of October, 1649. They took up their lodgings in the late King's apartments, turned the beautiful bedrooms and withdrawing-rooms into kitchens and sculleries, the council-hall into a brew-house, and made the dining-room a place to keep firewood in. They pulled down all the insignia of royal state, and treated with the utmost indignity everything that recalled to their memory the name or the majesty of Charles Stuart. One Giles Sharp accompanied them in the capacity of clerk, and seconded their efforts apparently with the greatest zeal. He aided them to uproot a noble old tree, merely because it was called the King's Oak, and tossed the fragments into the dining-room to make cheerful fires for the commissioners. During the first two days they heard some strange noises about the house, but they paid no great attention to them. On the third, however, they began to suspect they had got into bad company; for they heard, as they thought, a supernatural dog under their bed, which gnawed their bedclothes. The next day the chairs and tables began to dance, apparently of their own accord. On the fifth day something came into the bedchamber and walked up and down, and, fetching the warming-pan out of the withdrawing-room, made so much noise with it that they thought five church-bells were ringing in their ears. The sixth day the plates and dishes were thrown up and down the dining-room. On the seventh they penetrated into the bedroom in company with several logs of wood, and usurped the soft pillows intended for the commissioners. Upon the eighth and ninth nights there was a cessation of hostilities, but on the tenth the bricks in the chimneys became locomotive, and rattled and danced about the floors, and round the heads of the commissioners all the night long. On the eleventh the demon ran away with their breeches, and on the twelfth filled their beds so full of pewter-platters that they could not get into them. The thirteenth night the glass became unaccountably seized with a fit of cracking, and fell into shivers in all parts of the house. And on the fourteenth there was a noise as if forty pieces of artillery had been fired off, and a shower of pebble-stones, which so alarmed the commissioners that, "struck with great horror, they cried out to one another for help."

They first of all tried the efficacy of prayers to drive away the evil spirits; but these proving unavailing, they began seriously to reflect whether it would not be much better to leave the place altogether to the devil that inhabited it. They ultimately resolved, however, to try it a little longer, and, having craved forgiveness of all their sins, betook themselves to bed. That night they slept in tolerable comfort, but it was merely a trick of their tormentor to lull them into false security. When, on the succeeding night, they heard no noises, they began to flatter themselves that the devil was driven out, and prepared accordingly to take up their quarters for the whole winter in the palace. These symptoms on their part became the signal for renewed uproar among the fiends. On the 1st of November they heard something walking with a slow and solemn pace up and down the withdrawing-room, and immediately afterwards a shower of stones, bricks, mortar, and broken glass pelted about their ears. On the 2nd the steps were again heard in the withdrawing-room, sounding to their fancy very much like the treading of an enormous bear, which continued for about a quarter of an hour. This noise having ceased, a large warming-pan was thrown violently upon the table, followed by a number of stones and the jawbone of a horse. Some of the boldest walked valiantly into the withdrawing-room, armed with swords and pistols, but could discover nothing. They were afraid that night to go to sleep, and sat up, making fires in every room, and burning candles and lamps in great abundance, thinking that, as the fiends loved darkness, they would not disturb a company surrounded with so much light. They were deceived, however; buckets of water came down the chimneys and extinguished the fires, and the candles were blown out, they knew not how. Some of the servants who had betaken themselves to bed were drenched with putrid ditch-water as they lay, and arose in great fright, muttering incoherent

Two red and glaring eyes.

prayers and exposing to the wondering eyes of the commissioners their linen all dripping with green moisture, and their knuckles red with the blows they had at the same time received from some invisible tormentors. While they were still speaking there was a noise like the loudest thunder or the firing of a whole park of artillery, upon which they all fell down upon their knees and implored the protection of the Almighty. One of the commissioners then arose, the others still kneeling, and asked in a courageous voice, and in the name of God, who was there, and what they had done that they should be troubled in that manner. No answer was returned, and the noises ceased for a while. At length, however, as the commissioners said, "the devil came again, and brought with it seven devils worse than itself." Being again in darkness, they lighted a candle and placed it in the doorway, that it might throw a light upon the two chambers at once; but it was suddenly blown out, and one commissioner said that he had "seen the similitude of a horse's hoof striking the candle and candlestick into the middle of the chamber, and afterwards making three escapes on the snuff to put it out." Upon this the same person was so bold as to draw his sword; but he asserted positively that he had hardly withdrawn it from the scabbard before an invisible hand seized hold of it and tugged with him for it, and, prevailing, struck him so violent a blow with the pommel that he was quite stunned. Then the noises began again; upon which, with one accord, they all retired

into the presence-chamber, where they passed the night praying and singing psalms.

They were by this time convinced that it was useless to struggle any longer with the powers of evil that seemed determined to make Woodstock their own. These things happened on the Saturday night; and, being repeated on the Sunday, they determined to leave the place immediately and return to London. By Tuesday morning, early, all their preparations were completed, and, shaking the dust off their feet, and devoting Woodstock and all its inhabitants to the infernal gods, they finally took their departure.

Many years elapsed before the true cause of these disturbances was discovered. It was ascertained, at the Restoration, that the whole was the work of Giles Sharp, the trusty clerk of the commissioners. This man, whose real name was Joseph Collins, was a concealed royalist, and had passed his early life within the bowers of Woodstock; so that he knew every hole and corner of the place, and the numerous trap-doors and secret passages that abounded in the building. The commissioners, never suspecting the true state of his opinions, but believing him to be revolutionary to the backbone, placed the utmost reliance upon him; a confidence which he abused in the manner above detailed, to his own great amusement, and that of the few cavaliers whom he let into the secret.

THE DEVIL CAME AGAIN!

Quite as extraordinary and as cleverly managed was the trick played off at Tedworth, in 1661, at the house of Mr. Mompesson, and which is so circumstantially narrated by the Rev. Joseph Glanvil, under the title of "The Demon of Tedworth," and appended, among other proofs of witchcraft, to his noted work, called "Sadducismus Triumphatus." About the middle of April, in the year above mentioned, Mr. Mompesson, having returned to his house at Tedworth, from a journey he had taken to London, was informed by his wife that during his absence they had been troubled with the most extraordinary noises. Three nights afterwards he heard the noise himself, and it appeared to him to be that of "a great knocking at his doors, and on the outside of his walls." He immediately arose, dressed himself, took down a pair of pistols, and walked valiantly forth to discover the disturber, under the impression that it must be a robber; but, as he went, the noise seemed to travel before or behind him, and, when he arrived at the door from which he thought it proceeded, he saw nothing, but still heard "a strange hollow sound." He puzzled his brains for a long time, and searched every corner of the house; but, discovering nothing, he went to bed again. He was no sooner snug under the clothes, than the noise began again more furiously than ever, sounding very much like a "thumping and drumming on the top of his house, and then by degrees going off into the air."

These things continued for several nights, when it came to the recollection of Mr. Mompesson that, some time before, he had given orders for the arrest and imprisonment of a wandering drummer, who went about the country with a large drum, disturbing quiet people and soliciting alms, and that he had detained the man's drum, and that, probably, the drummer was a wizard, and had sent evil spirits to haunt his house, to be revenged of him. He became strengthened in his opinion every day, especially when the noises assumed, to his fancy, a resemblance to the beating of a drum, "like that at the breaking up of a guard." Mrs. Mompesson being brought to bed, the devil, or the drummer, very kindly and considerately refrained from making the usual riot; but, as soon as she recovered strength, began again, "in a ruder manner than before, following and vexing the young children, and beating their bedsteads with so much violence that everyone expected they would fall in pieces." For an hour together, as the worthy Mr. Mompesson repeated to his wondering neighbours, this infernal drummer "would beat 'Roundheads and Cuckolds,' the 'Tat-too,' and several other points of war, as cleverly as any soldier." When this had lasted long enough, he changed his tactics, and scratched with his iron talons under the children's bed. "On the 5th of November," says the Rev. Joseph Glanvil, "it made a mighty noise; and a servant, observing two boards in the children's room seeming to move, he bid it give him one of them. Upon which the board came (nothing moving it,

that he saw) within a yard of him. The man added, 'Nay, let me have it in my hand'; upon which the spirit, devil, or drummer, pushed it towards him so close, that he might touch it. This," continues Glanvil, "was in the day-time, and was seen by a whole roomful of people. That morning it left a sulphurous smell behind it, which was very offensive. At night the minister, one Mr. Cragg, and several of the neighbours, came to the house on a visit. Mr. Cragg went to prayers with them, kneeling at the children's bedside, where it then became very troublesome and loud. During prayer-time the spirit withdrew into the cock-loft, but returned as soon as prayers were done; and then, in sight of the company, the chairs walked about the room of themselves, the children's shoes were hurled over their heads, and every loose thing moved about the chamber. At the same time a bed-staff was thrown at the minister, which hit him on the leg, but so favourably, that a lock of wool could not have fallen more softly." On another occasion the blacksmith of the village, a fellow who cared neither for ghost nor devil, slept with John, the footman, that he also might hear the disturbance, and be cured of his incredulity, when there "came a noise in the room, as if one had been shoeing a horse, and somewhat came, as it were, with a pair of pinchers," snipping and snapping at the poor blacksmith's nose the greater part of the night. Next day it came, panting like a dog out of breath; upon which some woman present took a bed-staff to knock at it, "which was caught suddenly out of her hand, and thrown away; and company coming up, the room was presently filled with a bloomy noisome smell, and was very hot, though without fire, in a very sharp and severe winter. It continued in the bedroom panting and scratching for an hour and a-half, and then went into the next room, where it knocked a little, and seemed to rattle a chain."

The rumour of these wonderful occurrences soon spread all over the country, and people from far and near flocked to the haunted house of Tedworth, to believe or doubt, as their natures led them, but all filled with intense curiosity. It appears, too, that the fame of these events reached the royal ear, and that some gentlemen were sent by the king to investigate the circumstances, and draw up a report of what they saw or heard. Whether the royal commissioners were more sensible men than the neighbours of Mr. Mompesson, and required more clear and positive evidence than they, or whether the powers with which they were armed to punish anybody who might be found carrying on this deception, frightened the evil-doers, is not certain; but Glanvil himself confesses that all the time they were in the house the noises ceased, and nothing was heard or seen. "However," says he, "as to the quiet of the house when the courtiers were there, the intermission may have been accidental, or perhaps the demon was not willing to give so public a testimony of those transactions which might possibly convince those who he had rather should continue in unbelief of his existence."

As soon as the royal commissioners took their departure, the infernal drummer recommenced his antics, and hundreds of persons were daily present to hear and wonder. Mr. Mompesson's servant was so fortunate as not only to hear, but to see this pertinacious demon; for it came and stood at the foot of his bed. The exact shape and proportion of it he could not discover, but "he saw a great body, with two red and glaring eyes, which, for some time, were fixed steadily on him, and at length disappeared." Innumerable were the antics it played. Once it purred like a cat, beat the children's legs black and blue, put a long spike into Mr. Mompesson's bed, and a knife into his mother's, filled the porringers with ashes, hid a Bible under the grate, and turned the money black in people's pockets. "One night," says Mr. Mompesson, "there were seven or eight of these devils in the shape of men, who, as soon as a gun was fired, would shuffle away into an arbour," a circumstance which might have convinced Mr. Mompesson of the mortal nature of his persecutors, if he had not been of the number of those worse than blind, who shut their eyes and refuse to see.

In the meantime, the drummer, the supposed cause of all the mischief, passed his time in Gloucester gaol, whither he had been committed as a rogue and a vagabond. Being visited one day by some person from the neighbourhood of Tedworth, he asked what was the news in Wiltshire, and whether people did not talk a great deal about a drumming in a gentleman's house there? The visitor replied that he heard of nothing else; upon which the drummer observed, "I have done it; I have thus plagued him! and he shall never be quiet until he hath made me satisfaction for taking away my drum." No doubt the fellow, who seems to have been a gipsy, spoke the truth, and that the gang of which he was a member knew more about the noises at Mr. Mompesson's house than anybody else. Upon these words, however, he was brought to trial at Salisbury for witchcraft, and, being found guilty, was sentenced to transportation, a sentence which, for its leniency, excited no little wonder in that age, when such an accusation, whether proved or not, generally insured the stake or the gibbet. Glanvil says that the noises ceased immediately the drummer was sent beyond the seas; but that, somehow or other, he managed to return from transportation—"by raising storms and affrighting the seamen, it was said;" when the disturbances were forthwith renewed, and continued at intervals for several years. It was believed by many at the time that Mr. Mompesson himself was privy to the whole matter, and permitted and encouraged these tricks in his house for the sake of notoriety, but it seems more probable that the gipsies were the real delinquents, and that Mr. Mompesson was as much alarmed and bewildered as his credulous neighbours, whose excited imaginations conjured up no small portion of these stories—

"Which roll'd, and, as they roll'd, grew larger every hour."

Many instances of a similar kind, during the seventeenth century, might be gleaned from Glanvil and other writers of that period; but they do not differ sufficiently from these to justify a detail of them.

Criminal Problems

DISPOSAL OF MURDERERS' BODIES.

SINCE at present we retain the capital punishment on our Statute Book, however much its infliction may be contrary to the best and soundest principles of criminology, the duty is involved of seeing that the remains of those whose lives we have taken are disposed of in the best possible manner. The State has removed the offenders from the land of the living because they were menaces to the population while alive; it therefore behoves the authorities to take steps that the corpses of the culprits shall not be a danger to the people. One murderer is usually content with one victim, but the emanations from the putrefying body of that murderer may swell the tale of those slain through his agency to hundreds.

The principles which seem to govern our present method of burying prisoners who have suffered the extreme penalty of the law seem to be primarily cheapness; and, secondarily, secrecy. A few bushels of quick-lime, a fragile coffin, roughly knocked together, and a hole in the gaol yard satisfy the great requirement of the Home Office; no thought is given to the vital question of sanitation—to the proper destruction of the body, or to the possibility of the dead engendering disease in the living.

What is the result of this mode of disposing of the corpses of the hanged? When old Newgate was pulled down the other day, it was found that the remains of those who had suffered either outside its walls or in the privacy of the prison were more or less preserved. The lime which had been placed round the bodies for the purpose of hastening decomposition had in reality acted as a preservative, and beneath the stones of the grim Birdcage Walk the excavators found a seething mass of putrefaction, so awful, so repulsive, that the very men who were employed to transfer the human *débris* to a fresh burying place had to be paid extra wages for the task. Each minute they spent in the poisonous exhalations from the rotting flesh endangered their health, nay, even their lives. Here is an example of the product of the almighty gospel of cheapness which has been preached in connection with our prisons for so many years—the very means taken to destroy have preserved.

Nor is Newgate the only place of execution in the kingdom. Throughout the length and breath of the land there are prisons which hold beneath their pavement burying grounds every whit as noisome as that which has just been brought to light in the City of London.

Than this system, or, rather lack of system, the method of the Persians, is preferable. After execution the corpse of the convict is left on the ground at the spot where he met his death. A few hours suffice for the birds, beasts, and insects to utterly destroy the body, leaving no traces of the being who had been solemnly blotted out. True, the sight is disgusting, but the places of execution are well known, and those who do not revel in the horrible keep clear of the human shambles. The French hurry the headless body of the murderer to the nearest cemetery, bury it, or rather lower it into a grave, with the rites of the

Church, and then immediately disinter it and hand it over to the medical schools, so that the man who was worthless in life may, at least, do some service to mankind after his death. Sentiment alone is against this practice. It is necessary that bodies should be provided for the proper study of medicine, and it has been found that where dissection is the end of the murderer there is a difficulty in obtaining sufficient corpses for the prosecution of anatomical research, inasmuch as the relatives of the innocent strongly object to deliver up the corpses of their friends to the surgeon's knife.

In other European States, the sepulture in ordinary cemeteries follows execution, an objectionable proceeding; but one not fraught with more than ordinary danger. America has various practices. In those States which employ electricity in the place of the gallows the lifeless body is first subject to a minute autopsy and then chemically destroyed. In other provinces the corpses are buried privately outside the prison walls but without any particular treatment. So much for the existing methods. What is the ideal mode of treating the bodies of criminals—not only of the executed but also of those who die while under sentence?

In the first place cheapness must not be considered. The primary point to be looked to is the protection of the living. There must be no mouldering graveyards within our gaols to give off noxious exhalations to be breathed by the living. Secondly, it must be possible to preserve the remains of the dead who have not forfeited their lives to the Law, so that where sentiment demands it they can be laid in graveyards without the precincts of the gaol. Thirdly, nothing must be left of murderers for the relic-hunter. What method combines these three features? Surely none but cremation. Destruction is perfect; the ashes of those who have not suffered the extreme penalty can be preserved in an innocuous state for the relatives of the convict, or placed in the prison mortuary chapel, while those of murderers can be distributed to the winds. There is no possible objection to be raised against the establishment of prison crematoria, for the actual cause of death in the case of every convict dying in prison is ascertained, and an inquest held on the remains, so that there is no fear of any criminal act being hidden. The expenses need not be excessive, and sanitation is effectively ensured; even sentiment is favoured, for there can be no doubt that the clean ashes of a cremated body are vastly preferable to the horrors of decomposition.

This, then, is the only really scientific mode of disposing of our criminal dead, and in the interests of health should soon be established in this country, which prides itself on being in possession of the most perfect penal system in the world.

LEAVES FROM . . OUR NOTEBOOK

A Distinction and a Difference!

A TIRESOME person one day encountered Parsons, the Irish barrister, and remarked to him with an air of great importance, "Mr. Parsons, have you heard of my son's robbery?" "No", said the imperturbable Irishman. "Good gracious! Whom has he robbed?"

After Long Years.

IN the year 1789 a man named Home had become involved in some poaching affray which led to a prosecution for slander in the Ecclesiastical Court, and in the course of the trial one witness casually remarked that he had knowledge of the fact that Home had long ago killed one of his own children. Inquiry was made, Home was prosecuted, tried and convicted for the crime, which had been committed thirty-five years before.

Earl Ferrers.

A SINGULAR story is related in connection with this noble felon, who was hanged for murdering his steward.

After his trial and conviction, great efforts were made to obtain a pardon on the ground that the unfortunate peer, a victim to his over-bearing passion, was not in his right mind. His mother was written to and begged to say that the prisoner was insane; but she declined and replied, "If I admit there is insanity in the family how am I to marry off my daughters?"

Imprisonment for Debt.

IT is not now possible for a debtor to be thrown into durance vile because he is not able to satisfy his creditors—although, of course, he may be incarcerated for Contempt of Court, which amounts to the same thing.

But in the old days a man owing a small sum might languish and die in prison, and a case is recorded of a woman who died in Devon Gaol after forty-five years imprisonment for a debt of £19, and when the Thatched House Society set to work to ransom honest debtors, by paying what they owed, they, in twenty years, released 12,590 at a cost of 45s. per head. Oh! the good old times; how very bad they were!

Scaffold Etiquette.

ON one occasion a chimney-sweep, attired in the soot-grimed habiliments of his trade, was being conducted to Tyburn in the same cart as a very distinguished-looking and well-dressed Knight of the Road.

The latter resented the proximity of the sweep, and said to him in indignant tones, "Stand off fellow." The sweep replied, "Stand off yourself, Mr. Highwayman, I have as good a right to be here as you have," and they were hanged together. But the chronicle does not state if they rubbed against each other as they swung in space.

Strange Punishment for Mutiny.

WHEN Lord Exmouth, then plain Captain Pellew, was in command of one of his Britannic Majesty King George III.'s ships, he had sent on board his frigate a sailor who was notorious for raising petty revolutions. The man was supposed to be incorrigible, even the brutal floggings which obtained in those days having no effect on him. As soon as he came aboard, Captain Pellew sent for him, and addressed him thus: "I know all about you, and what your character is, my man. I'll give you a fair start and let all that is past be past; but if you take to playing at mutiny on board my ship, by G—, I'll have you headed up in a cask and cast you loose at sea!" The threat had its effect, for no one doubted that Pellew would keep his word if the man was unruly.

A "Cadger Map" of Britain.

IT is not generally known that the criminal fraternity has a mysterious written language, or series of hieroglyphics, peculiar to itself. This "sign language" is more prefectly developed in Southern Europe than it is in England, nevertheless, in 1849 a "cadger map" of Great Britain, in manuscript, intended for circulation among tramps, was discovered. Full descriptions of the qualities of the owners of the principal county houses and farms were marked by conventional signs on the map, thus: A square meant "Look out for the dog"; a circle, enclosing a cross, stood for "religious people: prayers and pudding"; a circle, crossed by a single line warned the wayfarer against risking a month in gaol; while a St. Andrew's Cross indicated that the owners of the house were too poor to give much. The best mark for the tramp was a lozenge, which gave promise of food and money at the spot so marked.

An Expert Boy Burglar.

THE palm for juvenile wickedness in the last century undoubtedly belongs to Michael Connor, who was indicted at the Central Criminal Court on 19th of June, 1841, for burglary. The details of the case were unimportant enough. The boy noticed a box in the room of a Mr. Smith, who lodged in St. Giles's, and determined to possess it. When the man was out the youngster calmly attempted to open the door with a couple of keys which he had stolen, and failing to do that forced the lock, took the box and decamped. A day later he pawned the contents of the trunk and was thus captured. The witnesses against him were mostly children, two being ten years of age; one only eight; and another an apprentice of fourteen. Connor was found guilty. "How old is he?" inquired the judge. "Thirteen, your lordship," replied the gaoler, "and he has been in custody many times before. He once received a sentence of ten years' transportation." "What? Ten years?" almost shrieked Judge Wrightman. "Yes, m'lud, I have a certificate here. He escaped and came back to England!" With that the judge sent Master Connor off to transportation for fifteen years, remarking, that he was the most precocious criminal he had ever met.

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

KETCH.—There have been several hangmen executed.

BONIFACE.—The first Licensing Act was passed in 1552.

DRIVER.—The history of the Invincibles will appear in an early number.

H. THOMAS.—In theory each county has to bear the cost of crimes committed within it.

L. M.—Jackson was hanged at Manchester for the murder of Warder Webb in August, 1888.

M. D.—In proportion to their numbers there have been very few doctors convicted of criminal offences.

STATISTICS.—The worst year for murders in the last half century was 1877, when twenty-three persons were executed.

A. R. M.—Pence was no mean musician, and was a connoisseur of violins, many of which were found in his house at Peckham.

LAWYER.—Felo-de-se is a criminal act, and implies that the suicide intended to kill himself while in his right mind. The body of a true suicide must be buried without Christian rites.

R. H. A.—There are really five capital offences in our statute books, namely, murder, treason, piracy, attempts to destroy arsenals and dockyards, and arson within the limits of the Port of London.

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